

Poets and Poetry

-- OF --

The Covenant

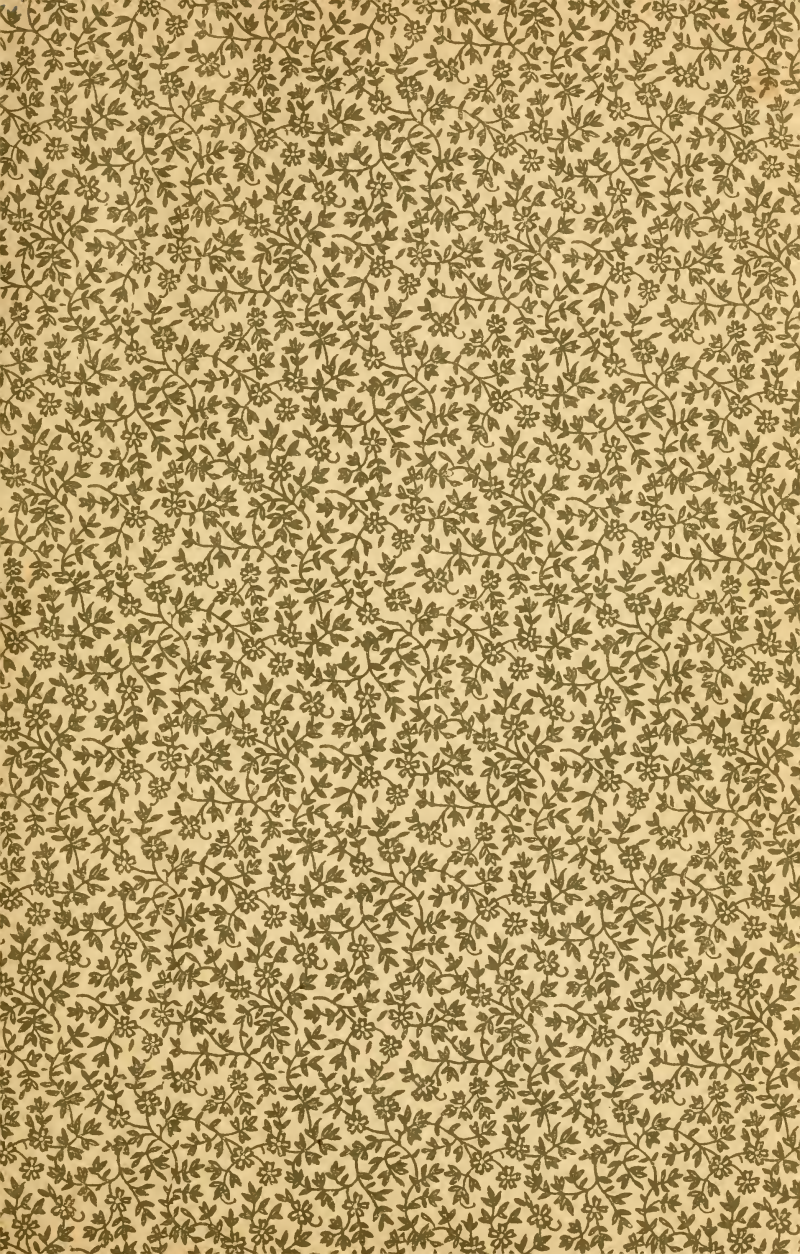
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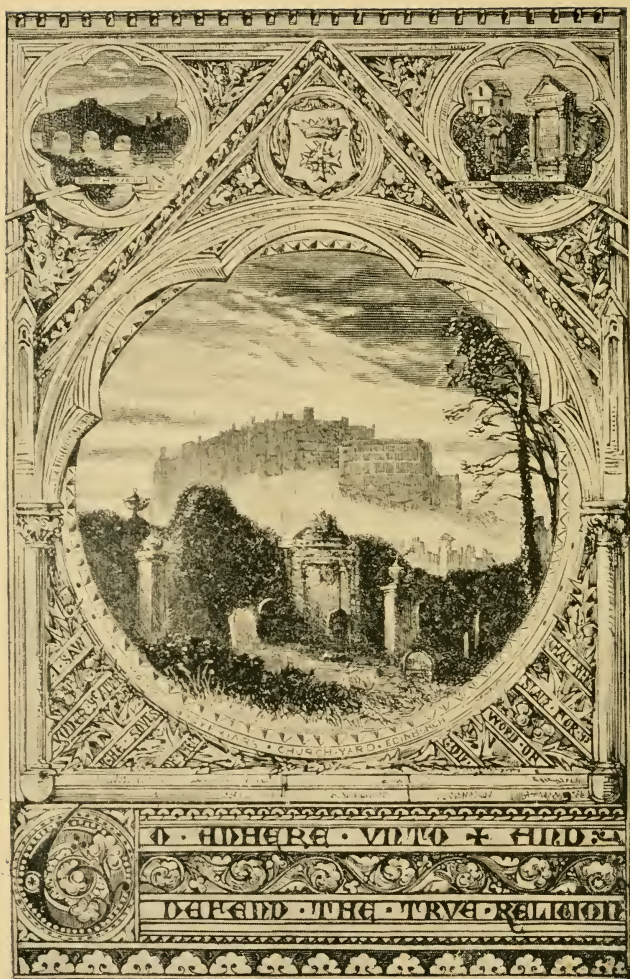
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POETS AND POETRY

OF

THE COVENANT

COMPILED, WITH

AN INTRODUCTION

BY

THE REV. DAVID McALLISTER, D. D., LL. D.

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TO
ADAM B. TODD,

WHO, AS ONE OF THE POETS OF THE COVENANT,
AND AS AUTHOR OF "HOMES, HAUNTS AND
BATTLEFIELDS OF THE COVENANTERS,"
HAS RENDERED MOST VALUABLE SER-
VICE TO THE SAME GLORIOUS
CAUSE OF CIVIL AND RELIG-
IOUS LIBERTY FOR WHICH
THE HEROES AND MAR-
TYRS OF THE COVE-
NANT SUFFERED
AND DIED,

THIS VOLUME
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

A volume of "Poetry of the Covenant" had been in the mind of the compiler for nearly forty years. His admiration and study of "The Cameronian Dream," when but a college student, first suggested such a volume. Acquaintance at a later day with George Gilfillan's "Martyrs, Heroes and Bards of the Scottish Covenant," and Mrs. Menteath's "Lays of the Covenant," and with a number of other spirited poems copied into the monthly magazine, "The Covenanter," published in Philadelphia by the Rev. James M. Willson, intensified the desire for such a compilation. But not until the work of preparation for publication was begun did the compiler dream of the wealth of poetry which the Covenanters and their times had called forth. The book happily styled "The Treasury of the Covenant," by the Rev. J. C. Johnston, of Dunoon, Scotland, published at Edinburgh in 1887, was a revelation of the rich resources of this field of literature. But careful search in both Glasgow and Edinburgh, in 1888, and again and more particularly in 1892, failed to bring to light many of the books referred to in that volume.

An acquaintance (since ripened into warm and enduring friendship) first formed with a kindred spirit, Mr. A. B.

Todd, of Cumnock, in a visit through Martyrland in the summer of 1892, opened up the treasures of this realm of sacred poetry in their wide extent. No other man is so thoroughly versed in the "Poets and Poetry of the Covenant" as this author. His study of the times of persecution; his admiration of the character of the heroes of the Covenant; his devotion to the principles for which multitudes of them laid down their lives; his frequent visits to the scenes of conflict and martyrdom in preparation for writing his admirable descriptions of the "Homes, Haunts, and Battlefields of the Covenanters;" and his own poetic sympathies and labors, have brought him into most intimate fellowship with all who have swept the strings of the Covenant harp. While materials for this volume have been drawn from every available source, as indicated all along with due acknowledgments, it is to Mr. Todd that we are indebted for many of the poems and for a large part of the biographical sketches of the following pages. Special mention should also be made of the help of Mr. John Tibby, of Sharpsburg, Pa., to the free use of whose large and valuable library the compiler was made most cordially welcome.

Should the present volume find a reception such as the merits of its gathered treasures certainly deserve, another series of kindred poems from the same rich and inexhausted field may be published at a future day. It was judged best not to insert in this volume any anonymous poem, or any of which the authorship is not certainly known, and of the writer of which at least a brief biographical sketch could not be given. Accordingly, a number of beautiful poems, collected during the preparation of this volume, are reserved for further investigation and a possible second series of Poets and Poetry of the Covenant.

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INTRODUCTION.

The natural scenery of Scotland is of itself sufficient to quicken into vigorous exercise the gifts of the poet. Mountain and loch, moorland and glen, inland valley and sea-girt coast—all conspire to stir the soul that is capable of deep and fervid emotion. Added to the rare beauties of her natural scenery are the tales and traditions of her political history—the records of as noble a struggle as any country ever made for civil liberty. The story of the Scottish chiefs who fought for the independence of the nation is a household song of freedom. Who has not felt the inspiration of the lines :

“Scots wha hae wi’ Wallace bled!
Scots wham Bruce has often led!
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victory!”

And no wonder that Mary Howitt, like Burns himself, has tuned her harp to this lofty key :

“O wild traditioned Scotland,
Thy briery burns and braes

Are full of pleasant memories
And tales of other days.
Thy story-haunted waters
In music gush along ;
Thy mountain glens are tragedies,
Thy heathery hills are song."

It was such thoughts as these that led Henry Ward Beecher to speak of Scotland, as a "land, which, though small, is as full of memories as the heaven is full of stars, and almost as bright. There is not the most insignificant piece of water that does not make my heart thrill with some story of heroism, or some remembered poem ; for not only has Scotland had the good fortune to have had men that knew how to make heroic history, but she has reared those bards who have known how to sing her histories."

But natural scenery and the records of an heroic struggle for civil liberty are not of themselves sufficient to attune the poet's harp to its highest and noblest strains. We only reach the climax of a country's poetical inspiration when to struggles for national independence and civil freedom is added the long conflict, amid the fires of fierce persecution, for freedom of conscience and liberty of religious faith. High as are the names of Bruce and Wallace, and glorious as is the record of their achievements, there are other names, unknown to the world's wide fame, that nevertheless exercise a deeper and more potent influence on the generations of posterity, as they come and go, and that will increase in their moulding power to the end of time. We must not only say with Mary Howitt,

" Land of the Bruce and Wallace!
Where patriot hearts have stood,"

but taking a loftier step we must add,

“ And for their country and their faith
Like water poured their blood!
Where wives and little children
Were steadfast to the death,
And graves of martyr warriors
Are in the desert heath.”

Cowper in the Fifth Book of “The Task,” has recognized in his most exalted verse, this “brighter prize” for which the martyr struggles:

“ Patriots have toiled, and in their country’s cause
Bled nobly ; and their deeds, as they deserve,
Receive proud recompense. We give in charge
Their names to the sweet lyre. Th’ historic muse,
Proud of the treasure, marches with it down
To latest times ; and sculpture in her turn
Gives bond in stone and ever-during brass
To guard them, and to immortalize her trust.
But fairer wreaths are due, though never paid,
To those, who, posted at the shrine of Truth,
Have fallen in her defence. A patriot’s blood,
Well spent in such a strife, may earn, indeed,
And for a time insure to his loved land
The sweets of liberty and equal laws ;
But martyrs struggle for a brighter prize,
And win it with more pain. Their blood is shed
In confirmation of the noblest claim—
Our claim to feed upon immortal truth,
To walk with God, to be divinely free,
To soar and to anticipate the skies.
Yet few remember them. They lived unknown
Till persecution dragged them into fame,
And chased them up to heaven. Their ashes flew—
No marble tells us whither. With their names

No bard embalms and sanctifies his song;
And history, so warm on meaner themes,
Is cold on this. She execrates, indeed,
The tyranny that doomed them to the fire,
But gives the glorious sufferers little praise."

What Cowper lamented in his day, that with the names of these old heroes of the Covenant "no bard embalms and sanctifies his song," is at length no longer true. The day has come when history and poetry give the glorious sufferers their well deserved praise. The national lyre of Scotland has within the present century sounded its sweetest notes in honor of the men who "lived unknown till persecution dragged them into fame."

It is this most exalted of all poetic inspirations that has called forth the "Lays of the Covenant" collected into this volume. For many years the memory of the Covenanters was traduced; their character was misrepresented; their motives were not understood. Fiction and a range of poetry, not the highest, were the effective implements by which they were portrayed in gloomy and repellant coloring. They were exhibited as sour and morose "fanatics." They were sometimes conceded to be "enthusiasts," but of a wild and unbalanced kind. During the closing years of the 17th century that witnessed a triumph of their principles, and during the long stretch of the succeeding century, the muse of Scotland failed to catch the fire and glow of the memories of that magnificent "Fifty Years' Struggle" for both civil and religious liberty, in which men of whom the world was not worthy had suffered and died. But with the opening of the nineteenth century James Grahame, the author of the poem styled "The Sabbath," caught the inspiration that had so long lain dormant in Scottish his-

tory and in the Scottish heart. To him belongs the honor of sounding "the key-note," as George Gilfillan has so happily expressed the thought, "of those many melodies of praise which have saluted their memories since."

What a fine illustration is this long-delayed tribute to the memory of the Covenanters of the seminal life of glorious and inspiring deeds! It is another realization of the truth of the 72d Psalm, that magnificent Messianic ode which anticipates the full establishment of the Kingdom of Christ as the acknowledged Ruler of the nations of the earth:

"Of corn a handful in the earth
On tops of mountains high,
With prosperous fruit shall shake, like trees
On Lebanon that be."

The seed is sown on cold and lonely mountain heights, where storms rage and tempests smite rock and tree with desolating fury. And after long waiting there seems to be no fruitage or harvest from the tearful sowing. But at length the seminal life asserts itself. And the little handful of seed waves in the abundant increase like the cedars of Lebanon. The seed of the Covenanters' struggle for civil and religious liberty was sown during the stormiest times of Scottish history, and often watered as it fell in moorland and glen and on mountain top with tears and blood. Early fruitage of freedom was borne, but with no fitting reward to the men who paid the costly price of the victory. For over a full hundred years the tribute of poetry was in substance—

"Stern, rushing upon Clavers' spears,
They won the freedom, and the scorn, of after years."

And history, for the long period, with the exception of a

few writers, said at most in a negative tone of praise, as Thomas Carlyle has expressed the thought: "Alas, is it not too true what is said, that many men in the van do always, like Russian soldiers, march into the ditch of Schweidnitz, and fill it up with their dead bodies, that the rear may pass over them dry shod and gain the honor? How many earnest, rugged Cromwells, Knoxes, poor peasant Covenanters, wrestling, battling for very life in rough, miry places, have to struggle, and suffer and fall, greatly censured, bemired—before a beautiful Revolution of eighty-eight can step over them in official pumps and silk stockings with universal three-times three!"

But the tribute so long due has at last been brought with its accumulation of interest, and the rich offering, in its wealth of bloom and fragrance, has now been laid for well nigh a hundred years upon the tombs of the heroes and martyrs of the Covenant. And we venture the prediction that ages to come will add still richer offerings to their memory, with tributary streams pouring in from every land in which the blessings won by their sufferings and death shall in due time be enjoyed.

In addition to such complete songs and poems as are found in this volume in memory of the Covenanters, occasional passages in other writings, like the one already quoted from Cowper, deserve to be noticed here. The following lines from the First Book of Wordsworth's *Excursion*, written of "The Wanderer," must not be omitted:

" Thus informed,
He had small need of books; for many a tale
Traditionary, round the mountains hung,
And many a legend, peopling the dark woods,
Nourished imagination in her growth,

And gave the mind that apprehensive power
 By which she is made quick to recognise
 The moral properties and scope of things.
 But eagerly he read, and read again,
 Whate'er the minister's old shelf supplied;
 The life and death of martyrs who sustained,
 With will inflexible, those fearful pangs
 Triumphantly displayed in records left
 Of persecution, and the Covenant-times,
 Whose echo rings through Scotland to this hour!"

In harmony with this fine passage is the following sonnet from Wordsworth's pen :

" When Alpine vales threw forth a suppliant cry,
 The majesty of England interposed,
 And the sword stopped; the bleeding wounds were closed,
 And Faith preserved her ancient purity.
 How little boots that precedent of good,
 Scorned, or forgotten, thou canst testify,
 For England's shame, O sister realm! From wood,
 Mountain, and moor, and crowded street, where lie
 The headless Martyrs of the Covenant,
 Slain by compatriot-Protestants, that draw
 From Councils, senseless as intolerant,
 Their warrant. Bodies fall by wild sword-law;
 But who would force the soul tilts with a straw
 Against a champion cased in adamant."

Letitia E. Landon, too, has laid her tribute on the graves of the Covenanters:

" There came a shadow o'er the land, and men
 Were hunted by their fellow-men like beasts,
 And the sweet feelings of humanity
 Were utterly forgotten; the white head,
 Darkened with blood and dust, was often laid

Upon the murdered infant, for the sword
 Of pride and cruelty was sent to slay
 Those who in age would not forego the faith—
 The faith they had grown up in. I was one of these :
 How could I close the Bible I had read .
 Beside my dying mother, which had given
 To me and mine such comfort? But the hand
 Of the oppressor smote us."

Nor must we forget the impromptu stanza of Robert Burns, thrown off on the inspiration of the moment, when he heard a gentleman acquaintance sneer at the memory of these Covenanter heroes, and term the Solemn League and Covenant "ridiculous and fanatical:"

"The Solemn League and Covenant
 Cost Scotland blood—cost Scotland tears :
 But it seal'd Freedom's sacred cause—
 If thou'rt a slave, indulge thy sneers."

This devotion to the cause of civil and religious liberty, celebrated in these poems, has a world-wide reach of influence, and is an example for all time. Wordsworth speaks of the English martyrs as men who

"Did bathe their hands in fire,
 So to declare their conscience satisfied :
 Nor for their bodies would accept release ;
 But, blessing God and praising Him, bequeathed
 With their last breath, from out the smouldering flame,
 The faith which they by diligence had earned,
 And through illuminating grace received.
 For their dear countrymen, and all mankind.
 O high example, constancy divine!"

With such "high example" and "constancy divine" the

contendings of the Scottish heroes and martyrs speak to "all mankind," and specially to "their dear countrymen," and to the friends of truth and righteousness in America to-day. And this volume will utterly fail of its main purpose, if the many beautiful poems garnered within its covers do not aid in cultivating in the souls of at least some of the men and women, older and younger, in our own fair land, the same heroic devotion to every cause that, amid popular opposition, maintains the honor of the King of kings. The same principles in substance for which the old Covenanters contended are the principles that must be maintained in the great moral controversies of the present times. And the same heroic stuff of which the old martyrs were made is the very material needed in the make-up of the Christian Reformer in America as well as Great Britain to-day.

Let us briefly sketch the leading principles for which the heroes and martyrs of these songs of the Covenant contended :

1. The supreme authority of God's Word in all the relations of human life. In the church, as one of their own number said, "they took their pattern, not from Rome, not even from Geneva, but from the blessed Word of God." They held that the state was bound to regulate all its affairs by the same law of ultimate authority. The Bible was to them a national as well as an ecclesiastical law-book. Kings and noblemen and lowlier citizens were all under its obligations in the sphere of political and civil life. And the family, too, needed God's Word, as the daily guide of the domestic circle. The place of the Bible in Covenanter families; the singing of a portion of Bible Psalmody and the reading of a chapter of the Scriptures every morning

and evening at the household altar, with the entire membership of the family gathered about, brought all domestic affairs under the acknowledged authority and educative influence of the divine law. Even when the father and the older sons were driven by the blood-hounds of persecution to hidings in dens and caves of the earth, or amid the solitudes of the mountains and moors, the mother or an elder daughter would keep the fire of the household altar brightly burning in the sorrowing yet not darkened home.

At the very basis of all this was the recognized right and responsibility of every individual to interpret the divine law for himself. Social bodies had to reach their interpretations for themselves; but no interpretation of God's Word by either church or state could overturn the Protestant principle, or rather the principle of the true Christian religion, that every man must give account of himself to God. But with the authority of God himself acknowledged as supreme for all, in every relation of life, a firm foundation was laid for the balance of liberty and law. Rights of conscience on the one hand, and a just and righteous authority in both church and state, on the other hand, here find their full security. Not the will of any man, pope, or king, or president; not the will of any body of men, presbytery, general assembly, house of commons, house of representatives, or senate; not the will of the millions that make up the sovereign people of the mightiest nation on earth, can be, according to this old Covenanter and Scriptural principle, of supreme and ultimate authority in any of the relations of human life. Church courts and civil legislatures may help wisely and opportunely to interpret and apply the law which God himself has given, and secure its beneficent effects; but over all human legislators

is the Divine Lawgiver whose authoritative will is revealed for man's every need in the Holy Scriptures. Only by such a Law and such a Lawgiver can individual and family and church and state be regulated in harmony with each other and for the good of all.

2. The kingship of Jesus Christ. This followed of necessity from the acceptance of the former principle. Taking the Bible as of ultimate and supreme authority, the Covenanters learned that Jesus Christ has been made Head over all things; that he is King of nations as well as King of Zion, and this in truth and reality, and not in some figurative and shadowy and unreal way. The Bible they accepted as the law-book of this King. And they sought to have Christ himself practically acknowledged and honored as King in both church and state. And no principle could be such a safeguard for the independence of the church. Both the popish idea, which would enslave the church to a frail human pontiff, blasphemously claiming for himself the infallibility which alone could justify the submission of men's consciences to his sovereign will; and the Erastian idea, which would subject the church to the civil ruler or the civil power, the sphere of which is entirely separate and distinct from that of the church, are cut up by the very roots by the application of this principle of the kingship of Jesus Christ. And in like manner the truth of his kingship over the state is the most effective means of saving the political being from the tyranny of popish claims of supremacy over nations and their rulers, and of securing for all citizens and subjects of civil government the most free and just and enlightened system of legislation possible—that which is based upon Christ's own "perfect law of liberty." Whatever views the old Covenanters held in favor of the

union of the church under Christ her King with the state under the same divine Ruler, they would never surrender the independence of the former to the latter, nor justify any assumption of tyrannical power by either the one or the other. The essential principle which they maintained, and which holds in every land to-day, is the subjection of both church and state, each as a moral agent, with moral character and accountability, and each in its own distinct and independent and yet interrelated sphere of moral conduct, under the moral law of God himself, administered by Christ as at once Head of Zion and Governor among the nations.

3. The duty of social public covenanting on the part of both the church and the nation. This principle of a religious covenant was derived also from the Scriptures, and this was the principle and practice which gave the Covenanters their name. Chief among the points to be carefully noted in the duty of covenanting are the following :

(1.) The covenant engagements are public. The oath of the compact or covenant is openly sworn. The engagements and oaths of a secret society are at the farthest possible remove from those of a true covenant. The former are deeds of darkness. They are a travesty upon all that is sacred and holy. They dread the light, by which their sacrilegious and even blasphemous character would be exposed. But a church's or a nation's covenant is an open and a public document, and the men and women who take upon themselves its comprehensive engagements with the solemnity of an appeal to God can challenge in broad daylight the investigation of the world.

(2.) Such a covenant as the National Covenants of Scotland of 1580, 1590, and again of 1638, is virtually a written compact or constitution of civil government. This docu-

ment prepared the way for the formulated fundamental laws of political organizations, of which the written constitutions of the American colonies and commonwealths and of the government of the United States itself are the most illustrious examples. A national covenant is a bond of loyalty between citizens among themselves, and between them and the rulers who exercise authority over them. It is framed in view of enemies and dangers to the nation's welfare and life. And in the days of the old Covenants, the arch enemy of civil and religious liberty was Popery, of which Prelacy was in many respects an imitator. The covenant was a mutual bond, therefore, of loyal and zealous vigilance against the wiles and assaults of the common enemy. Such an open and avowed bond of patriotism and loyalty is what true Americans need to-day, rather than the secret combinations of the lodges, against the same old enemy of all free institutions in both church and state.

(3.) It is pre-eminently a religious engagement. It accepts God's revealed will as the standard of duty, keeps the glory of God and the honor of Christ as King continually in view, and makes the Omniscient Jehovah, the Searcher of Hearts, a witness and party to the entire transaction. The engagement is entered into in the Lord's name, and with an avowed determination on the part of the covenanters, in the words of the deed of 1638, "to be good examples to others of all godliness, soberness, and righteousness, and of every duty we owe to God and man."

This principle of public covenanting by nations and by churches is the most practical and far-reaching of social principles, and will, when accepted and carried into effect by Christians generally, do much toward settling all the great problems of church and state. It is the idea of a

social compact and of the sacredness of contracts carried to its highest development.

An agreement in reference to any special matter, of greater or lesser importance and between whatever contracting parties, is held peculiarly sacred. From the simplest verbal contract of sale to a formulated treaty between two of the great nations of the earth, the terms of the compact are held to be imperatively binding.

In like manner a basis of agreement in any social organization for any specific lawful purpose, such as carrying forward the work of temperance, or other kindred work of reform, must always be regarded as peculiarly obligatory upon all who accept the terms of the brotherly compact. Such a compact or such articles of agreement, in business life, or for any specific benevolent or reform work, must be in accord with God's moral law; but they need not and are not intended to cover the sum of the moral duties of the members of the association in any of the necessary and essential relations of human life.

But a true social covenant is an agreement between the members of one of God's own moral creatures, especially the church or the nation, with the Divine Author of that moral being as Himself a party to the contract, and His law as the acknowledged standard in all the relations and duties of the social moral person that enters into the compact. And this covenant cannot limit the obligations of the covenanters to any specific work, however important it may be. In a true covenant the covenanters say with Israel of old in the covenant at Mount Sinai: "All that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient." (Ex. 24: 7. See also Ex. 19: 8; 24: 3; Deut. 5: 27-29; Josh. 24: 24; Neh. 10: 29.) The moral person of God's own creation is in this respect

entirely different from a voluntary society. The latter may be organized for some specific work, broader or narrower as the case may be. The law of such voluntary effort is that the work must be in harmony with the divine law. This work need not be *all* that the Lord has commanded. But God's own creature, the state or the church, is not at liberty to limit its sphere of duty as if it were a voluntary society. It is bound to accept the divine law in all the fullness of its requirements in that sphere of human life. And this is the essence of the principle of covenanting, that the church or the nation which enters into covenant shall bind itself in the covenant to make the fullest and completest application possible of the law of its Covenant God.

It is sometimes said that this principle of the Covenanters will do for the millennium, but not for our times. This is a vindication of the principle. What is to be in the millennium ought now to be. And nothing short of the acceptance and practical carrying out of this principle will ever cause the millennium to dawn upon our world. To this principle the followers of Christ must come—the acceptance of his will as law, and the full and fearless application of it in every department of human life according to the binding terms of the sworn covenant or fundamental compact of the social body, whether it be church or state. And when the followers of Christ thus enter into and faithfully keep their covenant with each other and with their Lord, both in the sphere of national life and in that of the church, the kingdom of heaven will be established on earth.

4. Still another principle of the conduct of the Covenanters in their struggle was that of dissent and separation from the evils of their day, especially from the immoral admin-

istration of church and state. It was at this point and on this account that the fires of persecution were kindled against them. Had they fallen in with the indulgence in the church, and accepted the subjection of her government to the Erastian and Prelatic principle; and had they hushed all testimony against the covenant-breaking House of Stuart, and the usurpations and tyranny of that selfish and unprincipled civil power, and incorporated with the corrupt administration of the government of the nation, they would have been left unmolested. But their public and practical dissent, and their separation from the ecclesiastical and civil immoralities of their day, brought down upon them the wrath of the authorities in both church and state. They appealed to the obligations of the National Covenant and the Solemn League and Covenant, in loyalty to which they ordered their whole life and walk and conversation. They did not act the part of rebels. They did not, in that struggle, even seek an amendment of fundamental law. They were in devoted allegiance to the constitutional principles of the government as they were. Their dissent, during the struggle preceding the Revolution Settlement of 1688, was not from an immoral constitution of civil government. After that settlement or adoption of a new constitutional principle which subjected the church to the state, their dissent was from the fundamental law of the nation. But during the days of persecution the main elements in the nation's constitution were the National Covenant and the Solemn League and Covenant. Their dissent, therefore, was from the practical administrative perversion of this authoritative constitutional law. They would have no part in that antagonism to the supreme law of the land, and the divine law on which the nation's law was founded.

They asked nothing more than liberty to follow out their convictions in harmony with the obligations of their covenants, and in dissent and separation from all that violated their covenant engagements. But the strong arm of force was laid upon them to compel conformity in faith and practice to that which their consciences condemned, and from which they must therefore, in loyalty to Christ, keep themselves free. Their dissent and separation from the immoralities of church and state was a stinging rebuke of the officials in power. And in hate and vengeance these officials let loose blood-thirsty dragoons upon a peaceable, God-fearing people. But the storm of the persecutor's anger was the Lord's call to faithful and uncompromising maintenance of the truth :

“ Whence came the summons for thto go?
From Thee awoke the warning sound!
‘ Out to your tents, O Israel! Lo!
The heathen’s warfare girds thee round.
Sons of the faithful! up, away!
The lamb must of the wolf beware:
The falcon seeks the dove for prey;
The fowler spreads his cunning snare.’

“ Day set in gold; ’twas peace around;
’Twas seeming peace by field and flood.
We woke, and on our lintels found
The cross of wrath—the mark of blood.
Lord! in thy cause we mocked at fears,
We scorned the ungodly’s threatening words,
Beat out our pruning hooks to spears,
And turned our ploughshares into swords!’”

As faithful witnesses for Christ they were ready to resist unto blood, striving against sin. They counted not their

lives dear when it was a question of fidelity to their Saviour King, and separation from what was a dishonor to his sceptre and crown.

These are essentially the principles, whatever modifications may be called for in their application in the land and days in which we live, that must be maintained and put into practical operation, if we are to defend our national life against the anarchy of political atheism on the one hand, and the despotism of popish assumption and aggression on the other hand. This is the sum of them—God's law the final moral standard for the nation, to be studied, interpreted and applied by the nation itself, under Christ as acknowledged Sovereign Lord and King, and with a mutual engagement by the people and the rulers in covenant to be loyal to Him, to the nation, and to one another, against every assault of the enemies of his Word, and of the light and liberty which flow therefrom. May the reading of these inspiring Poems of the Covenant win acceptance of these principles, and infix them in the hearts of American youth, in preparation for the conflict in which they shall have to bear their part.

And thus we come to consider briefly, in closing, the qualities of these heroes and martyrs in the maintenance of their patriotic and Scriptural principles. How much we need essentially the same qualities to-day in the battle with falsehood and wrong! The want of our times is men of this heroic mold who will stand by truth and right, let the consequences be what they may. We need the same fervent piety, striking its roots into the rich soil of the Divine Word, and nourished by familiar intercourse with the Hearer of Prayer day by day at the throne of grace. We need the same freedom from the fear of man in the true fear of God ;

the same readiness to endure hardship as good soldiers of the cross of Christ, and suffer the loss of all worldly goods and earthly comforts for the sake of King Jesus; the same complete surrender of self, of all that we are in body and spirit and all that we have, that we may glorify Him who hath redeemed us by his blood and who calls us to bear testimony to His royal claims.

Sad it is to be forced to admit that this very intensity of conviction and loyalty to what was believed to be God's truth did sometimes lead, through want of brotherly confidence and charity, to the alienation and separation of those who, notwithstanding differences of opinion on minor points, should have been united, as at Bothwell Bridge, against a common foe. And true it is, it must be confessed, that the same causes still sometimes operate among descendants of the old Covenanters to produce the same lamentable result. But better such strength of conviction, even with this occasional unhappy effect, than the utter indifference to great moral issues which avoids all conflict with error and wrong.

One of the chief lessons to be learned from the history of the Covenanters of Scotland by their descendants in every land to-day is to hold together in the advocacy of the great principles of their profession with the confidence and love of brethren. There are Bothwell Brigs of our own day that can be held only by the united strength of the entire covenanted host. In these present and still coming struggles let the most intense loyalty to truth and the most charitable and loving confidence be bound together with bands soft as silk and yet strong as steel.

Widely scattered throughout America are tens and even hundreds of thousands of descendants of the Covenant-

ers, into the hands of many of whom this volume may fall, and who will glory in their descent from an ancestry whose title of nobility was sealed in the dungeon, or on the scaffold, or at the stake. But let us all, as we admire the character of the men whose praises are sung in these Poems of the Covenant, and as we glory in a martyred ancestry, hear and heed the warning of Dr. Alexander Duff: "What substantial proof or pledge have ye ever yet given, that ye are really prepared and resolved to tread in their footsteps? You profess to imitate their example! Well, in order to this, you are called upon, like them, to deny yourselves, in order the more effectually to advance the cause of the Redeemer. And how do you respond to the summons? In token of admiration, you may, on a fine summer's morning, issue forth, with your trappings and equipage, to survey the scenes of their pilgrimage and their struggles. From the very lap of ease, and plenty, and grandeur, ye can gaze at those grey hills that environ and overhang the solitary vale—those monuments of nature, more stable than 'marble or brass'—those time-defying monuments of the piety and patriotism, and self-sacrificing heroism of your fathers;—and yet seriously believe that ye are of the number of their children and followers! Ye profess to imitate their example! But when called upon, like them, to deny yourselves, what new demonstration is furnished of your resolution to comply? 'Behold,' you may reply, 'Behold these great commemorative anniversaries! Only think of the trouble and expense which we have incurred in the celebration of them.' Indeed! you assemble in the colonnaded hall,—smiled on by wealth, and guarded by the ensigns of power:—you surround the banquet table, groaning under the load of a thousand delicacies, wafted by the gales of

heaven from a thousand shores:—and you believe that you are hereby honouring the memory, and proving your readiness to imitate the example of men who, for the sake of Jesus, were content to see their fields devastated; their dwellings wrapt in conflagration; and their parents, and wives, and children turned adrift for shelter among the dens and caves of the earth,—men who, for the sake of Jesus, willingly suffered themselves to be hunted, like partridges upon the mountains,—men who, for the sake of Jesus, were rejoiced to make the grassy turf their throne, the blue vault of heaven their canopy, and the naked rocks the walls of a sanctuary that oft resounded with the psalms of the sweet singer of Israel! When ye next thus commemorate the deeds of your fathers, ye ought to obliterate from your remembrance the memory of their sufferings and their sacrifices; else, how ought your cheeks to redden with the crimson blush of shame, and your eyes be converted into a fountain of tears, at the bitter contrast which your own conduct exhibits! But the sufferings and the sacrifices of these spiritual heroes ye cannot forget:—or, if ye do, would, that in a voice of thunder ye could be reminded that that very peace, and liberty, and security, and abundance which ye abuse,—turning them into instruments of self-aggrandizement and self-gratification,—transforming them into engines of ingratitude and treason against the Majesty of heaven; that all, all have been secured by the self-denial and self sacrifice of your fathers, and are handed down as an inheritance purchased at the cost of their blood! Oh, then, that ye could be made in right earnest to blush for yourselves, and weep for your children! Oh that, in order to renew the bygone days of self-denial and self-sacrifice, ye would now with God's blessing resolve to—

‘ Snatch from the ashes of your sires
The embers of their former fires!’

And then might we expect that the Lord would rend His heavens and come down; and, from the long suspended clouds of promise, copiously distil the dews of His grace on the chafed and parched soil of a world that is smitten and blighted with a curse.”

But this introduction must not end in a despondent strain. The men and women of the Covenant were strong in hope and faith. They believed the divine promises. And these promises assure us of the coming glory of the King. Men and women of the same heroic stamp may yet have to suffer and fall, but others will win the victory under Christ’s royal banner. Some of the literal descendants of the Covenanters will have no share in that certain triumph. But there shall be a perpetuation of the spiritual seed of the martyrs. In both America and Great Britain, leading, as these nations do, the vanguard of the cause of national consecration to the Mediatorial King, shall yet be recognized and honored a covenanted host, strong in faith, loyal to Christ and his law, separated from all that dishonors his authority and crown, arrayed on the side of truth and righteousness, pleading for the application of the Law of their Saviour King in every relation of human life, and marching onward to the sure and final victory.

“ Bear aloft Christ’s royal banner,
Crimsoned o’er with martyrs’ blood;
It hath waved through lapse of ages,
Undestroyed by fire or flood.
On the field of bloody combat
It hath waved amid the strife,
And our fathers, to preserve it,
Periled fortune, home, and life,”

POETS AND POETRY
OF
THE COVENANT.



Poets and Poetry of the Covenant.

JAMES GRAHAME.

AUTHOR OF "THE SABBATH."

[The following notice of this author is taken mainly from Gilfillan's "Martyrs and Heroes of the Scottish Covenant."]

James Grahame was the first laureate of the Covenant. No poet hitherto had set the deeds of the Covenanters, "fanatics," as they had been called, to music. It was reserved for James Grahame, the author of the Sabbath, to sound the first key-note of those many melodies of praise which have saluted their memories since.

This poet was a native of Glasgow, and studied at the University there. He then removed to Edinburgh, and became an advocate. From early life, however, he had entertained a dislike to the profession of the law, and aspired to that of a clergyman. In the year 1809, when he had already reached his forty-fifth year, he gained the desire of

his heart, by entering holy orders as a clergyman of the Church of England. He went south, and occupied various curacies in that church. His health, however, failed; his hopes of happiness and of promotion in his profession were grievously disappointed, and, within two years of his ordination, he came back to his beloved Scotland, "a withered flower," and returned to die. In his native city, on the 14th of September, 1811, he breathed his last.

James Grahame was himself a remarkable man, and was fortunate, besides, in his circle of friends. Campbell, the poet, knew him intimately, as did Jeffrey; and both in their memoirs speak of him with great affection and esteem. Professor Wilson has poured out a most beautiful and melting monody over his grave. He is described as a man of magnificent presence, of mild manners, of amiable temper, of sensitive disposition, and of a piety the most ardent and sincere. Campbell mentions Grahame as returning with him (after having sat up all night) from an excursion to Arthur's Seat to see the sun rise, and ere going to bed, pouring out the devotion of his heart in an extempore hymn, of which the bard of hope "never heard any thing equal." His genius was of a mildly-pensive and elegantly-descriptive kind. He had little constructive or dramatic faculty, his powers of reflection were rather feeble, nor does he ever mount into the seventh heaven of invention. His qualities were warm-hearted enthusiasm, deep-toned piety, and a rare truth and beauty of description. In touches, equally forceful and felicitous, of natural painting, he is not surpassed by Cowper or Thomson. As if in mere absence of mind he drops the brush upon the canvass, and thus produces exquisite effects. His poetry is on the whole rough and bare—a Scottish moorland—but has bright pools like

eyes sprinkled on it, and little clumps of golden gorse, making the solitary place glad.

But the poem which secures his fame, as well as justifies the introduction of his name into this volume, is unquestionably "The Sabbath." This, like his other poems, is unequal, has little art, skill, or unity, and abounds in prosaic passages. All this, however, is not sufficient to counterbalance its pleasing and various merit. It is a poem which has moved Scotland to its depths. The title so suggestive to every Christian heart; the sweetness of the opening lines, beginning

"How still the morning of the hallowed day;"

the fervour of the piety, unmingled with a particle of cant; the fine catholicity of the spirit; the beauty of the natural descriptions, and the nice individual strokes of picturesque power, have combined to render it a first favourite with the religious classes. But even more has its popularity been owing to its pictures of the Covenanting days. Grahame found in this an untouched field, and he has ploughed it with great vigour and effect. The haunts of the persecuted, among hills

"Where rivers, there but brooks,
Dispart to different seas;"

the field-preachings, where the Word was

"By Cameron thundered, or by Renwick poured
In gentle stream;"

the darker times, when the people dared no longer to meet in face of day, but had to shelter under the midnight canopy, are described in the most plaintive and powerful manner.

It was the first, and remains the most beautiful, libation poured upon the tomb of the martyrs. What added to its gracefulness and power was that Grahame when he wrote it was a member, and soon after became a minister, in the Episcopalian communion. True genius never did, never can, and never shall, in reality, belong to any party. Grahame died in the prime of life, with a broken constitution and, probably, a broken heart. But even on his premature deathbed, it must have ministered deep consolation to his spirit, that he had linked together, by the tie of an imperishable poem, two subjects of paramount interest and peculiar charm to every Christian Scotchman, and to many in other lands—the Sabbath and the great struggle of the Covenant.

TRIBUTE TO THE COVENANTERS.

O blissful days!

When all men worship God as conscience wills.
 Far other times our fathers' grandsires knew,
 A virtuous race to godliness devote.
 What though the sceptic's scorn hath dared to soil
 The record of their fame! What though the men
 Of worldly minds have dared to stigmatize
 The sister-cause, Religion and the Law,
 With superstition's name! yet, yet their deeds,
 Their constancy in torture, and in death,—
 These on tradition's tongue still live; these shall
 On History's honest page be pictured bright
 To latest times. Perhaps some bard, whose muse
 Disdains the servile strain of fashion's quire,
 May celebrate their unambitious names.
 With them each day was holy, every hour
 They stood prepared to die, a people doomed
 To death;—old men, and youths, and simple maids.
 With them each day was holy; but that morn
 On which the angel said, "See where the Lord

Was laid," joyous arose; to die that day
Was bliss. Long ere the dawn, by devious ways,
O'er hills, thro' woods o'er dreary wastes, they sought
The upland moors, where rivers, there but brooks,
Dispart to different seas. Fast by such brooks,
A little glen is sometimes scooped, a plat
With green sward gay, and flowers that strangers seem
Amid the heathery wild, that all around
Fatigues the eye: in solitudes like these,
Thy persecuted children, Scotia, foiled
A tyrant's and a bigot's bloody laws;
There, leaning on his spear, (one of the array,
Whose gleam, in former days, had scathed the rose
On England's banner, and had powerless struck
The infatuate monarch and his wavering host),
The lyart veteran heard the word of God
By Cameron thundered, or by Renwick poured
In gentle stream: then rose the song, the loud
Acclaim of praise; the wheeling plover ceased
Her plaint; the solitary place was glad,
And on the distant cairns, the watcher's ear
Caught doubtfully at times the breeze-borne note.
But years more gloomy follow'd; and no more
The assembled people dared, in face of day,
To worship God, or even at the dead
Of night, save when the wintry storm raved fierce,
And thunder-peals compell'd the men of blood
To couch within their dens; then dauntlessly
The scatter'd few would meet, in some deep dell
By rocks o'er-canopied, to hear the voice,
Their faithful pastor's voice. He, by the gleam
Of sheeted lightning, oped the sacred book,

And words of comfort spake: Over their souls
His accents soothing came,—as to her young,
The heathfowl's plumes, when, at the close of eve,
She gathers in, mournful, her brood dispersed
By murderous sport, and o'er the remnant spreads
Fondly her wings; close nestling 'neath her breast,
They, cherished, cower amid the purple blooms.

DAVID MACBETH MOIR.

Dr. Moir was born at Musselburgh, five miles east of Edinburgh, in January, 1798, and at the grammar school there, and at the University of Edinburgh, he received his education. At the early age of eighteen he received his diploma as a doctor of medicine, and began to practice in his native town, in company, however, with one more aged, Dr. Brown, already in practice there. At the same early age he published a volume of poems. Soon after he began to write for the magazines, and for many years wrote largely for Blackwood's, both in poetry and prose. In 1824, he published the "Legend of Genevieve, with other Tales and Poems," and soon after his humorous "Autobiography of Mansie Waugh, Tailor in Dalkeith," which was, and still is, immensely popular. In 1831 his "Outlines of Ancient History" appeared. In 1843, his "Domestic Verses," which displayed a great advance in the poetic field, the volume being highly extolled by Lord Jeffrey. Dr. Moir, so long known as "Delta," in Blackwood, died suddenly at Dumfries, on the 6th July, 1851, when on a visit to his gifted and excellent friend, Thomas Aird, the

poet, author of "The Devil's Dream," the most sublime, terrible, and original poem of this century.

We cannot better sum up the chief characteristics of Dr. Moir's muse than by quoting what Lord Jeffrey said of his "Domestic Verses" in a letter to the author: "I cannot resist the impulse of thanking you," he says, "with all my heart for the deep gratification you have afforded me, and the soothing, and I hope bettering, emotions which you have excited. I am sure that what you have written is more genuine pathos than anything, almost, I have ever read in verse, and is so tender and true, so sweet and natural, as to make all lower recommendations indifferent."

A Christian gentleman, an excellent physician, and a true poet, Dr. Moir, was greatly respected in life, and his name and his fame will long be savoury not only in Scotland, but wherever the English language is spoken.

THE COVENANTER'S NIGHT HYMN.

[As a preface to this poem in Blackwood's Magazine was the following historical summary :—The religious persecutions of the Covenanters were not mere things of a day, but were continued through at least three entire generations. They extended from the accession of James VI. to the English throne (testibus the rhymes of Sir David Lyndsay, and the classic prose of Buchanan) down to the revolution of 1688,—almost a century, during which many thousands tyrannically perished, without in the least degree loosening that tenacity of purpose, or subduing that perfervidum ingenium, which, according to Thuames, have been national characteristics. As in almost all similar cases, the cause of the Covenanters, so strenuously and unflinchingly maintained, ultimately resulted in the victory of Protestantism—that victory, the fruits of which we have seemed of late years so readily inclined to throw away ; and, in its rural districts more especially, of nothing are the people more justly proud than “the tales of persecution and the Covenant, whose echo rings through Scotland to this hour.” So says Wordsworth. Those traditions have been emblaz-

oned by the pens of Scott, M'Crie, Galt, Hogg, Wilson, Grahame, and Pollock, and by the pencils of Wilkie, Harvey, and Duncan—each regarding them with the eye of his peculiar genius. In reference to the following stanzas, it should be remembered that, during the holding of their conventicles, which frequently, in the more troublous times, took place amid mountain solitudes, and during the night, a sentinel was stationed on some commanding height in the neighbourhood, to give warning of the approach of danger.

I.

Ho! plaided watcher of the hill,
What of the night? what of the night?
The winds are low, the woods are still,
The countless stars are sparkling bright.
From out this heathery moorland glen,
By the shy wild-fowl only trode,
We raise our hymn, unheard of men,
To Thee, an omnipresent God!

II.

Jehovah! though no sign appear,
Through earth our aimless path to lead,
We know, we feel Thee ever near,
A present help in time of need—
Near, as when, pointing out the way,
For ever in thy people's sight,
A pillared wreath of smoke by day,
Which turned to fiery flame at night.

III.

Whence came the summons forth to go?
From Thee awoke the warning sound!

“Out to your tents, O Israel! Lo!

The heathen's warfare girds thee round,
Sons of the faithful! up, away!

The lamb must of the wolf beware:
The falcon seeks the dove for prey;
The fowler spreads his cunning snare.”

IV.

Day set in gold; 'twas peace around;
'Twas seeming peace by field and flood.
We woke, and on our lintels found
The cross of wrath—the mark of blood.
Lord! in thy cause we mocked at fears,
We scorned the ungodly's threatening words,
Beat out our pruning hooks to spears,
And turned our ploughshares into swords!

V.

Degenerate Scotland! days have been
Thy soil when only freeman trode;
When mountain crag and valley green
Poured forth the loud acclaim to God!
The fire which liberty imparts,
Refulgent in each patriot eye,
And graven on a nation's hearts,
The Word—for which we stand or die!

VI.

Unholy change! The scorner's chair
Is now the seat of those who rule;
Tortures, and bonds, and death, the share
Of all except the tyrant's tool.
That faith in which our fathers breathed,

And had their life, for which they died,
That priceless heirloom they bequeathed
Their sons—our impious foes deride.

VII.

So we have left our homes behind,
And we have belted on the sword,
And we in solemn league have joined,
Yea! covenanted with the Lord,
Never to seek those homes again,
Never to give the sword its sheath,
Until our rights of faith remain
Unfettered as the air we breathe!

VIII.

O Thou, who rulest above the sky.
Begirt about with starry thrones,
Cast from the heaven of heavens thine eye
Down on our wives and little ones.
From hallelujahs surging round,
Oh! for a moment turn thine ear,
The widow prostrate on the ground,
The famished orphan's cries to hear!

IX.

And Thou wilt hear; it cannot be,
That Thou wilt list the raven's brood,
When from their nest they scream to Thee,
And in due season send them food;
It cannot be that Thou wilt weave
The lily such superb array,
And yet unfed, unsheltered, leave
Thy children—as if less than they!

X.

We have no hearth—the ashes lie
In blackness where they brightly shone;
We have no home—the desert sky
Our covering, earth our couch alone;
We have no heritage—deprived
Of these, we ask not such on earth;
Our hearts are sealed; we seek in heaven
For heritage, and home, and hearth!

XI.

O Salem, city of the saints,
And holy men made perfect! We
Pant for thy gates, our spirits faint
Thy glorious golden streets to see;
To mark the rapture that inspires
The ransomed, and redeemed by grace;
To listen to the seraphs' lyres,
And meet the angels face to face!

XII.

Father in heaven! we turn not back,
Though briers and thorns choke up the path;
Rather the tortures of the rack,
Than tread the wine-press of Thy wrath.
Let thunders crash; let torrents shower;
Let whirlwinds churn the howling sea;
What is the turmoil of an hour
To an eternal calm with Thee?

JAMES HYSLOP,

AUTHOR OF "THE CAMERONIAN'S DREAM."

[THE most popular of all poems ever written on the Covenanters is "The Cameronian's Dream," as the author himself entitles it, or "The Cameronian Dream," as the title is perhaps more frequently given. There are few Covenanters, or descendants of Covenanters, whose blood has not been stirred by the strains of this impassioned production. And yet but little has been known, even among those most deeply interested in the poem itself, of its gifted young author. As a suitable introduction, therefore, to his best known poem, and the much longer and not much inferior one, "A Scottish Sacramental Sabbath," selected from all his productions for this volume, the following biographical sketch is here inserted from the *POLITICAL DISSENTER*, of Allegheny, Pa., to which it was contributed by Mr. A. B. Todd, author of "Homes, Haunts, and Battlefields of the Covenanters."]

This popular poet of the Scottish Covenant was born in 1798, and by descent was one of those of whom Richard

Savage thus pathetically writes in his poem "The Bastard :"

"He lives to build, not boast, a generous race—
No tenth transmitter of a foolish face;"

and he is said to have felt keenly the stain upon his birth, although his mother returned to the paths of virtue, and lived an exemplary Christian life till the end of her days.

The future poet was brought up in the humble abode of his maternal grandfather, George Lambie, whose little cottage stood in the green pastoral glen of the limpid Cra-wick, about two miles from the ancient royal burgh of San-quhar, so renowned and important in Covenanting story; where in all the hill country round, the Covenanters sought shelter in the dark and evil days of persecution, rendering it just such a "meet nurse for the poetic child" as it became to James Hyslop.

Adopting the calling of a shepherd, he went forth to the world with but a scanty education; but so ardent was his thirst for it, that before he was twenty, he by attending evening schools and self-tuition, had become not only an excellent English scholar, but had likewise acquired a good knowledge of Latin, French, mathematics, and algebra.

When very young he tended flocks at Dalblain, amid the deep mountain solitudes of Glenmuir; passing from thence to Nether Wellwood, a few miles to the north-east, and on the banks of the infant Ayr, and at the eastern end of Airmoss,

"Where Cameron's sword and his Bible are seen,
Engraved on the stone where the heather grows green."

With the history, traditions, and struggles of the Cov-

enantiſters, Hyslop had become early acquainted under the roof of his pious grandfather; and now he drew the inſpiration of poetry, as well as patriotiſm, from the ſcenes amid which he was a ſojourner.

From being a ſhepherd, he became a ſchool-maſter, teaching the children of the farmers and ſmall country lairds. When he had reached the age of twenty-one, he went to the town of Greenock (where no poet was ever known to meet with any countenance) and opened a ſchool, which proved unſucceſſful, when for a ſhort time he returned to his native wilds and paſtoral employment. In 1812, the poem by which he is beſt known, and on which his fame ſecurely reſts, "The Cameronian's Dream," appeared in "The Scot's Magazine," and attracted wide attention, the great critic Lord Jeffrey, being one of its admirers.

About this time he was a frequent contributor, both of poetry and of proſe, to the Magazine. Dr. Muirhead, the editor, having ſaid that "the ſphere of Scottiſh poetry muſt now be very contracted," Mr. Hyslop replied in ſome ſpirited letters to the editor, in one of which he thus beautifully ſays: "Had you ſpent as many Sabbath-days among the Scottiſh peasantry as I have done, I dare ſay you would join with me in thinking that there is yet an extenſive field for the cultivation of a higher order of poetry than much that has ever yet appeared in our language. It is certain that the ſubjects of ſome of our moſt admired Scottiſh poets are far from being exhausted. To mention one particular inſtance: how different a poem would Burns have produced had he carried the ſpirit of 'The Cottar's Saturday Night' into the morning of his Sacramental Sabbath? The poem would certainly have appeared to as much advantage, and the reſpectability of the Scottiſh character and religion

might, perhaps, have been more indebted to him ; as it is, however, he has left abundant room for the display of future talent, and, I think, it is much to be wished that some mighty genius, equal to the task, would step forward and mingle at once the social and religious feelings of the Scottish peasantry in the poetry of our native land. While such subjects remain unsung, shall it ever be said that the poetry of Scotland is susceptible of no further improvement ? Our bosom has often trembled with delight at the soft melting music of the Scottish harp when struck by the hands of a powerful master ; but we shall never be sensible of the highest power of its heart-melting melody till its wild notes be sounded in concert and unison with the songs of Zion."

In his subsequent and beautiful poem, "The Scottish Sacramental Sabbath," Mr. Hyslop gave excellent proof of the correctness of his views on the subject of Scottish poetry ; for that poem which is in the same measure as "The Cottar's Saturday Night," would have done high honour even to the genius of Robert Burns himself, being vivid, striking and true as a picture, beautiful in its descriptive power, and intensely pious in spirit.

Hyslop himself gives the incident upon which the poem was founded, and which occurred when the sacrament of the supper was being dispensed, in the open air, in the beautiful tree-shaded churchyard of Sanquhar, during the pastorate of the Rev. Mr. Rankine, an able and a godly minister. The account is as follows :

"After the action sermon, which, in those days, was preached from a tent in the field of graves, and when the first table was about to be served, a hasty thunder-storm, no uncommon occurrence, had gathered among the hills,

and stretching the awning of its tempest-cloud over the valley beneath, discharged its contents with ominous vehemence on the heads of the convening congregation. The noise of the thunder, and the rushing of the rain, caused some interruption; and Mr. Rankine, designedly leaving the thread of his discourse, addressed the audience in the following dignified and highly poetic strain, as if heaven inspired him at the moment:—‘My friends, how dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven. He before whom we must appear in judgment, from his pavilion of dark waters and thick clouds of the skies, in a voice of thunder is now addressing us who are assembled round his table; and I have no doubt that if the thin veil by which we are separated from the invisible world were drawn aside, we might discover, among these dark clouds where the thunder is rolling, the throne of Him from whose face the earth and the heavens shall flee away; we might behold on the mountains around us the bright armies of heaven drawn up in their shining ranks under the banners of the King of righteousness; we might behold those who have joined us at this table, whose graves are now rising green beneath our feet, but whose spirits are in glory;—I say, we might behold them looking upon us with heavenly joy and satisfaction, while we join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant never to be forgotten.’” Such was Mr. Rankine’s address; and Mr. Hyslop adds: “How awfully sublime after this was the devotion when the assembled multitudes were singing to the mild and simple melody (Coleshill) that awakens all the sacramental associations of departed years, as the elements were about to be distributed.” This, then, was the ground-work of the poem.

In 1821, Hyslop was, through the influence of Lord Jeffrey and other Edinburgh friends, appointed teacher on board the man-of-war ship *Doris*, and went with it on a cruise to South America; and it was when on this voyage, and when thinking of his native valley of the Nith, that he wrote "The Scottish Sacramental Sabbath." On his return home, the same kind patrons, through their friends in London, got him appointed a parliamentary reporter on the leading newspaper there; and afterwards head master of an academy near the city. All the while, however, it was the dearest wish of his heart to be able some day to return and spend his days in the pursuits of literature in his native green and bowery valley of the Crawick.

In the autumn of 1827, through the influence of Lord Spencer, he was appointed tutor on board the war vessel *Tweed*, then bound for the Cape of Good Hope. In high spirits, and full of bright prospects, he sailed away from his native isle, but, ah! to return no more forever. On her outward way the ship called at the Cape de Verde Islands, when a party of fifteen landed and remained all night on the island of St. Jago. On their return to the ship they were all seized with fever, and within two days eight of them, principally officers, died; one of them was James Hyslop, and the literary world long lamented the premature death of "The Muirkirk Shepherd"—the name by which he first became known to the poetic world. His death took place on the 5th of December, 1827, when he was only in the 29th year of his age.

Hyslop's poetry is very unequal; and while some of his productions are all aglow with poetic fire, and are spirited and elegant, others are dull, flat, and prosaic. This is particularly the case with his longest, and most ambitious poem,

"The Cameronian's Vision," though written some six years after "The Cameronian's Dream." - One stanza, however, is as beautiful as it is true. Referring to the times of the persecution, under the evil rule of the profligate Charles the Second, and his stolid and pig-headed brother James, when the saintly men of the Covenant, who had grown up during the Second Reformation, were driven from their churches into the desert moors, he says:

"For in cities the wells of salvation were sealed,
More brightly to burst in the moor and the field;
And the spirit which fled from the dwellings of men,
Like a manna-cloud rained round the camp in the glen."

The poem is descriptive of the martyrdom of the saintly John Brown of Priesthill, far up in the mountain wilds of Ayrshire, and closes with these vigorous stanzas put into the mouth of his new-made widow, and spoken by her to Claverhouse, as he rode away and left her alone in that wild and lonely desert, with the bloody corpse of her murdered husband, and her two terror-stricken babes; and we commend them to those hardly less heartless writers, who, in our day, have set themselves to whitewash this the most dastardly ruffian that ever bore a sword or commanded a troop, and from whose blood-crimsoned hands all the waters of Helicon could not wash away a single stain:

"Thou friendless, forsaken, hast left me and mine,
Yet my lot is a bless'd one, when balanc'd with thine,
With the viper remorse on thy vitals to prey,
And the blood on thy hands that will ne'er wash away.

"Thy name shall be wafted to far future time,
A proverb for cruelty, cursing, and crime;

Thy dark picture, painted in blood shall remain
While the heather waves green o'er the graves of the slain.

“Thy glory shall wither; its wreaths have 'een gain'd
By the slaughter of shepherds thy sword who disdained—
That sword thou hast drawn on thy country for hire:
And the title it brings shall in blackness expire.

“Thy name shall be Claver'se, the blood-thirsty Scot,
The godly, the guiltless, the grey-haired who shot.
Round my Brown's bloody brow glory's garlands shall wave.
When the muse marketh '*murderer*' over thy grave.”

THE CAMERONIAN'S DREAM.

In a dream of the night I was wafted away
To the moorland of mist where the martyrs lay;
Where Cameron's sword and his Bible are seen,
Engraved on the stone where the heather grows green.

'Twas a dream of those ages of darkness and blood,
When the minister's home was the mountain and wood:
When in Wellwood's dark moorlands the standard of Zion,
All bloody and torn, 'mong the heather was lying.

It was morning; and summer's young sun, from the east,
Lay in loving repose on the green mountain's breast.
On Wardlaw and Cairn-Table the clear shining dew
Glistened sheen 'mong the heath-bells and mountain flowers
blue.

And far up in heaven in the white sunny cloud,
The song of the lark was melodious and loud;
And in Glenmuir's wild solitudes, lengthened and deep,
Was the whistling of plovers and the bleating of sheep.

And Wellwood's sweet valley breathed music and gladness;
The fresh meadow blooms hung in beauty and redness;
Its daughters were happy to hail the returning,
And drink the delights of green July's bright morning.

But ah! there were hearts cherished far other feelings.
Illumed by the light of prophetic revealings,
Who drank from this scenery of beauty but sorrow,
For they knew that their blood would bedew it to-morrow.

'Twas the few faithful ones who, with Cameron, were lying
Concealed 'mong the mist, where the heath-fowl was crying;
For the horsemen of Earlshall around them were hovering,
And their bridle-reins rang through the thin misty covering.

Their faces grew pale, and their swords were unsheathed,
But the vengeance that darkened their brows was unbreathed;
With eyes raised to Heaven, in meek resignation,
They sang their last song to the God of Salvation.

The hills with the deep mournful music were ringing;
The curlew and plover in concert were singing;
But the melody died 'midst derision and laughter,
As the hosts of ungodly rushed on to the slaughter.

Though in mist and in darkness and fire they were shrouded,
Yet the souls of the righteous stood calm and unclouded;
Their dark eyes flashed lightning, as, proud and unbending,
They stood like the rock which the thunder is rending.

The muskets were flashing; the blue swords were gleaming;
The helmets were cleft, and the red blood was streaming;

The heavens grew dark, and the thunder was rolling,
When in Wellwood's dark moorlands the mighty were falling.

When the righteous had fallen, and the combat had ended,
A chariot of fire through the dark cloud descended.
The drivers were angels on horses of whiteness,
And its burning wheels turned upon axles of brightness.

A seraph unfolded its doors bright and shining,
All dazzling like gold of the seventh refining;
And the souls that came forth out of great tribulation
Have mounted the chariot and steeds of salvation.

On the arch of the rainbow the chariot is gliding;
Through the paths of the thunder the horsemen are riding.
Glide swiftly, bright spirits, the prize is before ye.
A crown never fading, a kingdom of glory!

A SCOTTISH SACRAMENTAL SABBATH.

The Sabbath morning gilds the eastern hills;
The swains its sunny dawn wi' gladness greet,
Frae heath-clad hamlets 'mang the muirland rills,
The dewy mountains climb wi' naked feet,
Skiffin' the daisies drouket, i' the weet;
The bleating flocks come nibblin' down the brae
To shaddowy pastures screen'd frae summer's heat,
In woods where twiklin' waters glide away,
'Mong holms of clover red and bright brown rye-grass hay.

His ewes and lambs brought careful frae the height,
The shepherd's children watch them frae the corn;
On green sward scented lawn, wi' gowans white,
Frae page o' pocket psalm-book soil'd and torn,
The task prepar'd assign'd for Sabbath morn,
The elder bairns their parents join in prayer;
One daughter dear, beneath the flowering thorn
Kneels down apart her spirit to prepare,
On this her first approach, the sacred cup to share.

The social chat wi' solemn converse mix'd,
 At early hour they finish their repast;
 The pious sire repeats full many a text
 Of sacramental Sabbaths long gone past.
 To see her little family featly dress'd
 The careful matron feels a mother's pride,
 Gie's this a linen shirt, gie's that a vest;
 The frugal father's frowns their finery chide,—
 He prays that Heaven their souls may wedding robes provide

The sisters, basket, seek the garden walk,
 To gather flowers, or watch the warning bell;
 Sweet-William, danglin' dewy frae the stalk,
 Is mix'd wi' mountain-daisies, rich in smell,
 Green sweet-briar sprigs, and cowslips frae the dell,
 Where Spargo shepherds pass the lane abode.
 An' Wanlock miners cross the muirland fell;—
 Then down the sunny winding muirland road,
 The little pastoral band approach the house of God.

Streams of my native mountains, Oh! how oft
 That Sabbath morning walk in youth was mine;
 Yet fancy hears the kirk-bell, sweet and soft,
 Ring o'er the darkling woods o' dewy pine.
 How oft the wood-rose wild and scented thyme
 I've stoop'd to pull while passing on my way;
 But now in sunny regions south the line,
 Nae birks nor broom-flow'rs shade the summer brae.
 Alas! I can but dream of Scotland's Sabbath day.

But dear that cherished dream. I still behold
 The ancient kirk, the plane-trees o'er it spread,

And seated 'mong the graves, the old, the young,
As once in summer days, for ever fled.
To deck my dream the grave gives up its dead :
The pale precentor sings as then he sung ;
The long-lost pastor wi' the hoary head
Pours forth his pious counsels to the young,
And dear ones from the dust again to life are sprung.

Lost friends return from lands beyond the main,
And boyhood's best beloved ones all are there ;
The blanks in family circles fill'd again,
No seat seems empty round the house of prayer.
The sound of psalms has vanished in the air,
Borne up to heaven upon the mountain breeze ;
The aged minister with silvery hair,
In tent erected 'neath the fresh green trees,
Spreads forth the book of God with holy pride and sees

The eyes of circling thousands on him fix'd ;
The kirk-yard scarce contains the mingling mass
Of kindred congregations round him mix'd,
Close seated on the gravestones and the grass.
Some crowd the garden-walls ; a wealthier class
On chairs and benches round the tent draw near ;
The poor man prays far distant ; and alas !
Some seated by the graves of parents dear,
Among the fresh green flow'rs let fall the silent tear.

Sublime the text he chooseth : " Who is this
From Edom comes ? in garments dyed in blood.
Travelling in greatness of his strength to bless ;
Treading the wine-press of Almighty God ? "

Perchance the theme the Mighty One who rode
Forth leader of the armies cloth'd in light,

Around whose fiery forehead rainbows glow'd,
Beneath whose tread heav'n trembled; angels bright
Their shining ranks arranged around his head of white.

Behold the contrast: Christ, the King of kings,

A houseless wanderer in a world below;
Faint, fasting by the lonely desert springs;
From youth a man of mourning and of woe.

The birds have nests on summer's blooming bough;
The foxes on the mountains find a bed;

But mankind's Friend found every man his foe.
His heart with anguish in the garden bled;
He, peaceful like a lamb, was to the slaughter led.

The action-sermon ended, tables fenc'd,

While elders forth the sacred symbols bring,
The day's more solemn service now commenced;

To heaven is wafted on devotion's wing,
The psalm those entering to the altar sing:

"I'll of salvation take the cup, I'll call
With trembling on the name of Zion's King;
His courts I'll enter, at his footstool fall,
And pay my early vows before his people all."

Behold the crowded tables clad in white,

Extending far above the flowery graves;
A blessing on the bread and wine-cup bright
With lifted hands the holy pastor craves.

The summer's sunny breeze his white hair waves;
His soul is with his Saviour in the sky.

The hallow'd loaf he lifts, and breaks, and gives
The symbols to the elders seated nigh:
"Take, eat the bread of life, sent down from heaven high."

He in like manner also lifted up
The flagon fill'd with consecrated wine:
"Drink, drink ye all of it, salvation's cup,
Memorial mournful of his love divine."
Then solemn pauseth;—save the rustling pine
Or plane-tree boughs. no sound salutes mine ears.
In silence pass'd, the silver vessels shine;
Devotion's Sabbath-dreams from by-gone years
Return'd, till many an eye is moist with springing tears.

Again the preacher breaks the solemn pause:
"Lift up your eyes to Calvary's mountain—see
In mourning veil'd, the mid-day sun withdraws,
While dies the Saviour bleeding on the tree.
But hark! the stars again sing jubilee;
With anthems heaven's armies hail their King
Ascend in glory from the grave set free;
Triumphant see him soar on seraph's wing,
To meet his angel hosts around the clouds of spring.

"Behold, His shining robes of fleecy light
Melt into sunny ether soft and blue;
Then in this gloomy world of tears and night,
Behold the table He hath spread for you.
What though you tread affliction's path—a few,
A few short years your toils will all be o'er.
From Pisgah's top the promis'd country view,

The happy land far on Immanuel's shore,
Where Eden's blissful bowers bloom green for evermore.

.. Come here, ye houseless wanderers, soothe your grief.

While faith presents your Father's lov'd abode;
And here, ye friendless mourners, find relief,
And dry your tears in drawing near to God.

The poor may here lay down oppression's load:
The rich forget his crosses and his care;
Youth enter on religion's narrow road;
The old for his eternal change prepare;
And whosoever will, life's waters freely share.

.. How blest are they who in his courts abide,

Whose strength, whose trust, upon Jehovah stay;
For He in his pavilion shall them hide
In covert safe, when comes the evil day;
Though shadowy darkness compasseth his way,
And thick clouds like a curtain hide his throne.

Not through a glass our eyes shall gaze;
In brighter worlds his wisdom shall be shown,
And all things work for good to those that are his own.

.. And blessed are the young, to God who bring

The morning of their days in sacrifice;
The earth's young flow'rs when yet fresh with the spring,
Send forth an incense pleasing in his eyes.
To me, ye children, hearken, and be wise.

The prophets died; our fathers, where are they?

Alas! this fleeting world's delusive joys,
Like morning clouds and early dews, decay.
Be yours that better part that fadeth not away.

“ Walk round these walls, and o’er the yet green graves

Of friends whom you have lov’d let fall a tear.

On many dresses dark deep mourning waves

For some in summers past who worshipp’d here.

Around these tables, each revolving year,

What fleeting generations have I seen?

Where, where my youthful friends and comrades dear?

Fled, fled away, as they had never been;

All sleeping in the dust beneath those plane-trees green.

“ And some are seated here, mine aged friends,

Who round these tables never more shall meet;

For him who bowed with age before you stands,

The mourners soon shall go about the street.

Below those green boughs, shadow’d from the heat,

I’ve bless’d the Bread of Life for threescore years;

And shall not many mould’ring ’neath my feet,

And some who sit around me now in tears,

To me be for a crown of joy when Christ appears?

“ Behold, he comes with clouds! a kindling flood

Of fiery flame before his chariot flees!

The sun in sackcloth veil’d, the moon in blood,

All kindreds of the earth dismay shall seize:

Like figs untimely shaken by the breeze,

The fixed stars fall amid the thunder’s roar;

The buried spring to life beneath those trees;

A mighty angel, standing on the shore.

With arms stretched forth to heaven swears time shall be no
more!

“ The hour is near; your robes unspotted keep;

The vows you now have sworn are sealed on high—

Hark! hark! God's answering voice in thunders deep,
 'Midst waters dark and thick clouds of the sky.
And what if now to judgment in your eye
He burst, where yonder livid lightnings play,
 His chariot of salvation passing by;
The great white throne, the terrible array
Of Him before whose throne the heavens shall flee away?

“My friends, how dreadful is this holy place,
 Where rolls the thick'ning thunder! God is near;
And though we cannot see Him face to face,
 Yet as from Horeb's mount His voice we hear.
The angel armies of the upper sphere
Down from these clouds on your communion gaze;
 The spirits of the dead, who once were dear,
Are viewless witnesses of all your ways.
Go from His table, then; with trembling tune His praise.”

HARRIET STUART MENTEATH,
AUTHOR OF "THE LAYS OF THE KIRK AND
COVENANT."

BY A. B. TODD.

Mrs. Harriet Stuart Menteath is sprung from one of the most worthy and ancient families in Wigtownshire—Covenanters, too, in the olden time, and is the youngest daughter of Major General Agnew of Dalreagle. She was, however, born in London, where, and on the Continent of Europe, she resided till she had reached the age of nineteen; and till then, she knew nothing of the religious struggles of Scotland. At that time she made a lengthened summer visit to her father's friends in Wigtownshire, when, under the guidance of a lady friend, a new world of thought opened upon her, and she visited the numerous Covenanting scenes in the district, read Samuel Rutherford's Letters under the shadow of the ruined kirk walls of Anworth, and soon began to sing with lofty fervor of the Covenanters.

In 1841 she was united in marriage to Mr. Alexander Menteath, sixth son of the late Sir Charles Granville Stuart Menteath, of Closeburn and Mansfield, Bart. Shortly after

several spirited poems from her pen appeared from time to time in different publications, and were at once much and deservedly admired. In 1851 she collected some of these, which with others, all commemorative of scenes and incidents in the Covenanting era, she published under the title of "Lays of the Kirk and Covenant," which at once became popular. The "Lays" were then—and remain so still—a noble antidote to the most unhistorical "Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers," which had appeared the previous year, and which made a hero of Graham of Claverhouse, a man (we scorn to call him a soldier) who, with monstrous and unheard of cruelty, could with his own hand shoot the quiet and godly John Brown of Priesthill in presence of his weeping wife and wailing children at the door of their lonely moorland cot!

Mrs. Menteath's "Lays" have none of the artificial polish and cold, lifeless glitter of Aytoun's, but they possess, and are full of those nobler qualities—truth, nature, and an ever-flowing stream of genuine and unforced poetry, which Aytoun, with all the tricks of art, was unable to give to his; for, with some ability, the ambitious professor was not one of Nature's poets at all, and the "Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers" are like one of those deceitful, dried-up brooks of the East to which, in the words of Job, "the companies came hither and were ashamed;" while Mrs. Menteath's are refreshing, pure, and perennial as those streams of living water which, in apocalyptic vision, the rapt seer of Patmos saw meandering through the plains of heaven.

This gifted lady is not only the poet of suffering humanity, and of the basely and wrongfully oppressed Covenanters, but she is also the sweet singer of Nature, with her boundless and numberless beauties; and the influence of the varied and

delightful scenery of her native Galloway is largely seen and felt in her fresh and vigorous poems. The lone crest of the mountain, Cairnharrow's lofty brow; the woods of summer green, with their dew-dripping branches; the blue-bells by the brook; the little gleaming lakes; the quiet valleys; the grey mists creeping over the hills; the clear and indescribable beauty of the light of the autumn morning; the lichen-covered stones which mark the martyrs' graves, with "the murmur loud and cadence low" of the never-silent sea, give visions of delight and glow through that vigorous and harmonious verse of hers, which, when once read, can never be forgotten, but keeps sounding on in the ear of memory through all the after life.

A long life of exile on the Continent, at first for the health of her children, latterly for her own, has, nevertheless, left Mrs. Menteth with heart as warm as ever towards all that relates to the Covenanting times; but these same circumstances have not only prevented her from publishing any other volume, but even from bringing out any new edition of her fervid and patriotic "Lays," as she at one time intended, and ought to do, seeing that they have been out of print, and much sought after, for more than thirty years.

INTRODUCTION TO "LAYS OF THE KIRK AND COVENANT."

"Till doomsday shall come, they shall never see the Kirk of Scotland and our Covenant burnt to ashes; or, if it should be thrown in the fire, yet it cannot be so burnt or buried as not to have a resurrection."—SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

SCOTLAND! hallowed in thy story,
Who would trace thine annals right,
One peculiar page of glory,
Ever brightens on his sight!
Not the honors, far descended,
Of thine ancient hero kings;
Not thy bulwarks, blood defended—
These are but thy meaner things!
True, the pulse exulting flutters;
True, our souls within us burn,
Trumpet names as Freedom utters,
Wallace, Bruce, and Bannockburn!
But a holier joy subdues us,
Tracing, while our heartstrings thrill,

How the Saviour deigned to choose us,
In his cause to suffer still!
Honored be the patriot story!
Well may Scottish hearts beat high;
Yet a far-excelling glory
Glad the heaven-anointed eye—
Heritage, unbought, unpriced,
Rich in the reproach of Christ!

Early—early, on our mountains,
Presage of a glorious day,
Pure, as from its native fountains,
Faintly broke the Gospel ray.
Storm and cloud the pathway covers,
By our rude forefathers trod;
Yet that dawning brightness hovers
Where St. Columb walked with God:
Ever broadening, ever welling,
From Iona's holy home
Poured the radiance, sin-dispelling,
Till it met the fogs of Rome!

Dark eclipse the earth then shrouded;
Lurid phantasms filled the air;
But the glorious sun, though clouded,
Shorn, and beamless, *still was there!*
Witness, many a faint forewarning,
Struggling through the night of crime;
Prescient of a second dawning
Of the Gospel's noonday prime.
Streaks, that like the northern light,
Shoot in promise up the night!

Lo! it comes! the mist hath risen—
Martyr pyres the gloom dispel;
Scotland wakes, and bursts her prison,
Lighted by the flames of hell!
Rome hath wrought her own undoing;
Rome infatuate! Rome accurst!
All her fabric, one vast ruin,
Crumbles 'neath the thunderburst!
Fierce the strife, and fierce the slaughter;
Blood her rubbish moistens o'er,
Even till error's loveliest daughter
Falls upon a hostile shore!
Poor forfeit to the fatal band,*
Once lightly sealed with careless hand!
Twice crowned Queen—thrice wedded wife—
More regal in her death than life!

Now the infant church hath quiet;
Surely now her toils may cease!
O'er the wild waves' rout and riot
Broods the halcyon wing of peace!
Rome hath wrought her own undoing!
Papal fires no longer blaze!
Ah! but forth the mighty ruin,
What new portents mar our gaze!
Sin, the fiend! is hydra-headed—
Far the church's promised rest;

* An allusion to the infamous League of Bayonne, the egg from which the Massacre of St. Bartholomew was hatched, and to which Mary Queen of Scots was a consenting party.

Avarice, with ambition wedded,
Points new weapons at her breast!
Brief her Murray's true upholding—
Nor tears nor prayers protract its span;
And the helm falls from his holding
Who never feared the face of man!*

While myriad mischiefs swarming spring,
From minions of a minion King!

Ah! the eye is sick with seeing;
Ah! the heart is faint with fear.
Clouds athwart the horizon fleeing,
Harbingers of tempest near!
God hath laid to sleep his chosen;
Who the mighty shall withstand?
And the tide of faith seems frozen
In the winter of the land!
For a space it darkens, darkens,
Hope and promise in the tomb!
But the Lord looks down, and hearkens
Sobs of prayer amid the gloom!

.. Nay, my people—not forsaken,
Though afflicted sore thou art.
Of my strength thy hold is taken;
Thy fresh springs are in my heart!
From the deep vault of the prison;
From the lone isle of the sea;
From thy banished ones hath risen
An accepted voice to me!

* John Knox.

Chosen in affliction's waters,
Chosen 'neath the oppressor's rod,
I have sealed thy sons and daughters
In a covenant with God!

Pass thou on, a sign and wonder,
As my nation was of yore;

In the secret place of thunder

I have laid thy help in store!

Quit thy hold of earthly favor;

Touch not the accursed thing!

Monarchs *must* abhor thy savor

While they set at naught thy King!

Part not—halve not thine allegiance,

Till I come to claim mine own;

In the woe of thine obedience

Bear my Cross and guard my Crown,

All its thorns in thy true sight,

Transfigured into beams of light!"

Thus, a witness to the Churches.

Scotland's Church hath ever been—

Carnal men, with vain researches,

Musing what the sign may mean!

Like her Master, poor and lowly,

Seeking naught of price below.

All she claims, with freedom holy,

Still about His work to go;

Coveting nor wealth nor station;

Terrible to naught but sin;

Mean in outward estimation,

She is glorious within!

Trace her unmolested going—

Caesar finds observance meet;
Living waters round her flowing,
Oh, how beautiful her feet!
Hope, o'er those broad waters gliding,
Fast pursues the waning night,
And the home of her abiding,
Gathers still and radiates light!
Strange! that in her pathway ever
Strifes and oppositions spring;
Nay! she sows beside the river.
And her shout is of a King!

Since from Herod's couch the slumber
Parted at the wise men's word,
Kings and rulers without number
Band themselves against the Lord!
Tolls a death-knell through their riot;
Shakes a terror 'neath their scorn;
And they seek, with vain disquiet,
For the Babe in Bethlehem born!
Hating still, in deadliest measure,
Who that rising sceptre own;
Marring all their pomp and pleasure
With the shadow of a throne!
True! they kneel with feigned behavior,
Myrrh and frankincense will bring;
Priest and Prophet own the Saviour,
But—they crucify the King!
Wouldst thou hail an earthly Master,
Then the world would love its own!
Grasp thy banner-truth the faster—
See that no man take thy crown!

Hope thou not, then, earth's alliance;
Take thy stand beside the Cross;
Fear, lest by unblest compliance,
Thou transmute thy gold to dross!
Steadfast in thy meek endurance.
Prophecy in sackcloth on—
Hast thou not the pledged assurance,
Kings one day shall kiss the Son?
Oft thy foes may triumph o'er thee;
Tread thy carcass in the street;
Sing aloud the hate they bore thee—
Thou shalt stand upon thy feet!
Life through all thy veins returning,
In the sight of those who doomed—
And the Bush, for ever burning,
Never—never—be consumed!

Now unto the hill-tops get thee
Whence the sunrise we descry;
Nightly on thy watch tower set thee,
For his coming draweth nigh!
Tell the nations of the glory
Through the blackness we discern;
Sound a trumpet with the story
Of the King who shall return!
Call to Judah in her blindness;
Bid benighted Israel hear;
Drop the word of truth and kindness
On the heathen's palsied ear!
Trim thy lamp—the night-hours cheering;
Wash thy robes from every stain;
Watch, to hail the glad appearing

Of the bridegroom and his train!
Haste! thy coming Lord to greet!
Cast thy crown before his feet!
Only, may his quest for thee
Find thee—what he made thee—Free!

A MARTYR'S GRAVE.

Far off amidst the hills
The wild bird hath her nest.
And the loud trickling mountain rills
Gladden the earth's green breast;
And there the sun's last rays are thrown,
And there the storm-cloud broods alone,
And Spring's soft dews, and Summer's glare
Freshen and fade the wild flowers there!

Why should I seek the spot?
Are there not lovelier scenes by far,
Wild woods, where day intrudeth not,
Skies that neglect the star?
Why should I track the hunter's path,
Why should I brave the tempest's wrath,
To stand with thee, at evening lone,
Beside a lichen-mantled stone?

Hush! this is holy ground.
Thou who this very day hast prayed,

Thy children kneeling all around,
 None making thee afraid,
 Muse on that time when praise and prayer
 Ascended through the midnight air,
 Only from lips and hearts nerved high,
 To glorify their God and die!

This is a martyr's grave!
 And surely here the dews are given
 In richer showers, and wild flowers wave
 More in the smile of heaven!
 And something in the stirring air
 Tells us that angel wings are there;
 And angel watchers keep the space,
 To be their own sweet resting place."

* * * * *

They feared to tell his mother,
 A widow poor and lone.
 She had been deaf for many a year,
 But she caught the first low tone!
 Then suddenly stopped the whirring wheel,
 And suddenly snapped the thread!
 As she tossed her withered arms to heaven,
 With one wild heart-cry—*Dead!*
 Well hast thou sped, my dear, dear son!
 Soon hast thou reached the goal:—
 The cruel archers shot at thee,
 But they could not reach thy soul!

PEDEN AT THE GRAVE OF CAMERON.

A sound of conflict in the moss! but that hath passed away,
And through a stormy noon and eve the dead unburied lay;
But when the sun a second time his fitful splendors gave,
One slant ray rested, like a hope, on Cameron's new made
grave!

There had been watchers in the night! strange watchers gaunt
and grim,
And wearily, with faint lean hands, they toiled a grave for
him;
But ere they laid the headless limbs unto their mangled rest,
As orphaned children sat they down, and wept upon his breast.

O! dreary, dreary, was the lot of Scotland's true ones then,
A famine-stricken remnant, wearing scarce the guise of men;
They burrowed, few and lonely, 'mid the chill, dank mountain
caves,
For those who once had sheltered them were in their martyr
graves!

A sword had rested on the land—it did not pass away.
Long had they watched and waited, but there dawned no
brighter day
And many had gone back from them, who owned the truth of
old;
Because of much iniquity their love was waxen cold!

There came a worn and weary man to Cameron's place of rest,
He cast him down upon the sod; he smote upon his breast;
He wept as only strong men weep, when weep they must, of
die;

And, "Oh! to be wi' thee, Richie!" was still his bitter cry!

"My brother! O my brother! thou hast passed before thy time,
And thy blood it cries for vengeance, from this purple land of
crime;

Who now shall break the bread of life unto the faithful band
Who now upraise the standard that is shattered in thine hand?

"Alas! alas! for Scotland! the once beloved of heaven;
The crown is fallen from her head, her holy garment riven.
The ashes of her Covenant are scattered far and near,
And the voice speaks loud in judgment, which in love she
would not hear!

"Alas! alas! for Scotland! for her mighty ones are gone.
Thou, brother, thou art taken; I am left almost alone;
And my heart is faint within me, and my strength is dried and
lost,

A feeble and an aged man—alone against a host!

"O pleasant was it, Richie, when we two could counsel take
And strengthen one another to be valiant for his sake.

Now seems it as the sap were dried from the old blasted tree,
And the homeless, and the friendless, would fain lie down
with thee!"

It was an hour of weakness, as the old man bowed his head ;
And a bitter anguish rent him, as he communed with the dead.
It was an hour of conflict, and he groaned beneath the rod ;
But the burthen rolled from off him as he communed with his
God!

" My Father! O my Father! shall I pray the Tishbite's prayer,
And weary in the wilderness, while Thou wouldst keep me
there?

And shall I fear the coward fear, of standing all alone,
To testify for Zion's King, and the glory of His throne?

" O Jesus! blessed Jesus! I am poor, and frail, and weak.
Let me not utter of mine own, for idle words I speak;
But give me grace to wrestle now, and prompt my faltering
tongue,
And breathe Thy name into my soul, and so I shall be strong!

" I bless Thee for the quiet rest Thy servant taketh now ;
I bless Thee for his blessedness, and for his crowned brow ;
For every weary step he trode, in faithful following Thee,
And for the good fight foughten well, and closed right valiant-
ly!

" I bless Thee for the hidden ones, who yet uphold Thy name,
Who yet for Zion's King and Crown shall dare the death of
shame.

I bless Thee for the light that dawns even now upon my soul,
And brightens all the narrow way with glory from the goal!

“The hour and power of darkness—it is fleeting fast away.
Light shall arise on Scotland, a glorious gospel day.
Wo! Wo! to the opposers; they shall shrivel in His hand.
Thy King shall yet appear for thee, thou covenanted land!

“I see a time of respite, but the people will not bow;
I see a time of judgment, even a darker time than now.
Then, Lord, uphold Thy faithful ones, as now Thou dost uphold;
And feed them, as Thou still hast fed Thy chosen flock of old!

“The glory! O the glory! it is bursting on my sight.
Lord! thy poor vessel is too frail for all this blinding light!
Now let Thy good word be fulfilled, and let Thy kingdom come;
And, Lord, even in Thine own best time, take Thy poor servant home!”

Upon the wild and lone Airmoss, down sank the twilight
gray;
In storm and cloud the evening closed upon that cheerless
day;
But Peden went his way refreshed, for peace and joy were
given,
And Cameron's grave had proved to him the very gate of
heaven!

THE SIGNING OF THE COVENANT.

I'm old! I'm old! I'm very frail! my eyes are dim with age.
Scarce can I trace the words of life upon this sacred page.
Then out upon the unquiet heart that yearns, and will not rest.
To be where Scotland rallies now her truest and her best!

I heard them with the earliest dawn! I heard them gathering
fast!

A sound, as on the mighty sea, the menace of the blast;
A mingled sound of thousand feet, and voices blent in one,
And on the living spring-tide swept—and I was left alone!

Alone! alone! oh wearily the day hath lingered by!
With now and then a far-off shout, cleaving the distant sky;
Yet have I wrestled with my God, some hours as moments
past;

But age halts soon—my son, my son! it is thy step at last!

“Father! a solemn eve hath fallen, a mighty deed is done:
Pledged to his country and his God, receive and bless thy son,
And pray, my father, ceaseless pray, that I may never shame
The oath of God, to which, this day, I have affixed my name!

—“ We met within the ancient walls, where once the Grey-
friars ruled,
A concourse vast of earnest men, in common danger schooled;
Earth's titled ones, God's ministers, poor, rich, together
driven;
Christ's flock, awaiting, 'neath the storm, their Shepherd's
sign from heaven!

“ And solemnly, oh solemnly! went up the breath of prayer,
The silence, as a shadow, brooding o'er the thousands there;
Only the pulse of each strong heart amid the stillness heard,
Through which the voice of Henderson a nation's suit pre-
ferred!

“ Ay, father! there was One, amid our convocation then,
Whose eyes are as a flame of fire, to search the souls of men;
Whose Spirit, moving wondrously, from heart to heart, can
bring
A willing people to the feet of their Almighty King!

“ And when the noble Loudon spake of Scotland's Gospel
prime,
Her covenants of other days, her glad espousal time,
How fearless, through the wilderness, her God she followed
still,
And found a very present help in every time of ill,
“ Till one by one, her mighty men were gathered to their
graves,
And sons, degenerate from their sires, made Christ's own free-
men slaves,
Discrowning His anointed head to gem an earthly brow;
Making our Father's holy house the ruin it is now!—

“ Oh! then there was such weeping, through that bowed and
silent throng,

Such self-accusing bitterness for guilt contracted long,
Such binding of the broken vows upon the soul once more,
That very moment made us free, as we were free of yore!

“ And now, with tone distinct and clear, as one whose word
is power,

Johnston of Warriston stood forth, (God’s gift in danger’s
hour,)

A mighty parchment in his hand, from which he read, the
while

A sudden sunburst filled the place with heaven’s approving
smile!

“ He ended, and there was a pause—a pause of holy fear—
Who, to attest the oath of God, shall first adventure near;
It was not doubt, but solemn awe, and self-distrusting shame,
And that each deemed his brother bore a less unworthy name!

“ Till the good Earl of Sutherland—the brave old Earl and
true,

One moment bowed his reverent head, then toward the table
drew;

‘ So deal my God with me, and mine, till latest ages be,
As we prove steadfast in this bond, I bind on them and me!’”

“ Then followed Rothes quickly on—Cassilis, and Hay. and
Home;

Montrose, as if almost he grudged to lose the foremost room;
Loudon, his country’s beacon-light amid her mirkiest hour,
With many a noble name beside, a kingdom’s hope and flower!

“ Now Henderson, the called of God ; Dickson, the owned of
heaven ;

(Surely a blessing waits the land to which such guides are
given!)

Guthrie, as though upon the cast his life he longed to stake ;
And Rutherford, with look inspired, as if his Master spake !

“ Bless God, my father, who hath lent the land we love so well.
Sons valiant for the truth on earth, more than my tongue can
tell,

To name but those already proved by many a searching test,
Would wile us from the hour of prayer, and steal thy midnight
rest !

“ Yet must thou hear : when all had signed within the house
of God,

How still a multitude without, each on the other trode,
Pressing with fervent footsteps on, and many an earnest prayer,
That they in Scotland's Covenant might register their share !

“ Oh ! Arthur's Seat gave back the shout of that assembled
crowd,

As one bare forth the mighty bond, and many wept aloud ;
They spread it on a tombstone head, (a martyr slept beneath,)
And some subscribed it with their blood, and added ‘ Until
death !’

“ Ay ! young and old were moved alike with prayers, and
groans, and tears.

Surely the fruit of such a day is yet for many years !

And, owned in heaven, the strong appeal of each uplifted
hand,

As evening's sun went down upon the covenanted land !”

—That old man rose up in his place, he bared his locks of
gray;

“ Lord, let thy servant now depart, for I have seen this day;
Upon my head in early youth, John Knox’s hand hath lain,
And I have seen his buried work unsepulchered again!

“ Speed on thou covenanted cause! God’s blessing upon thee!
Baptized in Scotland’s dearest blood albeit thou needs must
be.

Christ came not to send peace on earth—only may that red
rain

Still fructify thy living seed, till He return again!

“ My conuntry! Oh my country! yea for thee the light is sown.
Only be steadfast in thy trust—let no man take thy crown!
Thine be the standard-bearer’s place! the post of suffering
high.

God’s blessing on the Covenant—I’ll sign it ere I die!”

THE MARTYRS OF WIGTON.

AY! bonnie hills of Galloway! the clouds above ye driven
Make pleasant shadows in your depths, with glints and gleams
of heaven;

And ye have fairy, hidden lakes, deep in your secret breast,
Which shine out suddenly like stars, as the sunbeams go to rest;
And ye have dells, and greenwood nooks, and little valleys
still,

Where the wild bee bows the harebell down, beside the moun-
tain rill;

And over all, gray Cairnsmore glooms, a monarch stern and
lone,

Though the heather climbs his barrenness, and purples half
his throne!

O bonnie hills of Galloway! oft have I stood to see,
At sunset hour, your shadows fall, all darkening on the sea;
While visions of the buried years came o'er me in their might,
As phantoms of the sepulchre, instinct with inward light!
The years, the years, when Scotland groaned beneath her
tyrant's hand,

And it was not for the heather, she was called “the purple
land;”

And it was not for their loveliness, her children blessed their
God
For the secret places of the hills, and the mountain heights
untrod.

Oh! as a rock, those memories still breast time’s surging flood;
Her more than twice ten torture years of agony and blood!
A lurid beacon light, they gleam upon her pathway now;
They sign her with the Saviour’s seal—His cross upon her
brow!

And never may the land whose flowers spring fresh from
martyr graves,

A moment’s parley hold with Rome, her mimics, or her slaves;
A moment palter with the chains, whose scars are on her yet.
Earth must give up the dead again, ere Scotland can forget!

—A grave, a grave is by the sea, in a place of ancient tombs;
A restless murmuring of waves for ever o’er it comes;
A pleasant sound in summer tide—a requiem low and clear;
But oh! when storms are on the hill, it hath a voice of fear!
So rank and high the tomb weeds wave around that humble
stone,

Ye scarce may trace the legend rude, with lichen half o’er-
grown.

But ask the seven years’ child that sits beside the broken wall;
He will not need to spell it o’er—his heart hath stored it all!

A peasant’s tale—a humble grave; two names on earth un-
known;

But Jesus bears them on His heart before the eternal throne!

And kings, and heroes, yet shall come, to wish their lot were
bound

With those poor women slumbering beneath the wave girt
ground!

The earth keeps many a memory of blood as water poured;
The peasant summoned at his toil, to own and meet his Lord;
The secret hungering in the hills, where none but God might
see—

Ay! Earth had many martyrs, but these were of the sea!

“The redcoats, lass! the redcoats!” cry the weans from off the
street.

Who knows but Claver’s evil eye, may blast them if they
meet?

Nay! only Bruce and Windman come! but, oh! wae worth the
way;

They have gotten Gilbert Wilson’s bairns in their cruel hands
to-day!

See Annie! bonnie Annie! oh, but she is wasted sore

With weary wandering in the hills this seven month and more;
And Margaret, with her bleeding feet and weather-stained
brow—

But surely One alone could breathe the calm upon it now!

—She recks not of the jibing words those ruthless soldiers
speak;

She recks not of her bleeding feet, her frame so worn and
weak;

She sees not even the pitying looks that follow as she goes;
Her soul is filled so full with prayer that God alone she knows!
Long hath she looked for such a day with awe and shuddering
dread;

Its terror in the night hath fallen, haunting her cavern bed ;
And she hath prayed in agony that, if he might not spare,
Jesus would bear her charges then—and he hath heard her
prayer !

They have brought her to their judgment-hall, a narrow prison-
room ;

And once she looked up, as they crossed, from sunlight into
gloom ;

And a sound of bitter weeping close beside her now she hears,
And she wished her hands unshakled, just to dry her mother's
tears !

They have questioned of her wanderings ; they have mocked
her with their words ;

They have asked her if the Covenant could shield her from
their swords,

Or if she sought a miracle to test her call the more,

That she ventured to her father's home—right past the curate's
door !

They questioned her with cruel taunts, and waited for reply.
She met her father's look of woe, her mother's streaming eye.
A moment quivered all her frame ; strange gaspings choked
her breath ;

Then fell the words forth, one by one, as from the lips of death :

“ The blink of our own ingle, it came glancing o'er the tide,
And we were wet and weary both upon the mountain side.

My very heart grew sick within my father's face to see,
And Annie yearned to rest her head upon my mother's knee !

“ O men ! but they are bitter tears ye cause the houseless weep,
With haunting thoughts of food and fire that will not let them
sleep ;

And temptings of home words and ways, even whispering as
they pray,

Until Another takes the load, once tempted even as they!"

There was a murmur through the crowd—first hope, and then
despair,

For in the scoffing laugh of Bruce was that that could not
spare:

"O lass! ye should have ta'en the bay e'er there was light to
see!"

She answered to that pitying voice—"I dared na for the sea!"

Alas! it is a little stroke draws from the flint the fire;

And but a little spark may light the martyr's funeral pyre.

And in the hearts of evil men such mischiefs smoldering herd,
That cruel thought, to cruel deed, may kindle as a word!

"Ho! Ho! the sea! the raging sea! and can it tame your
pride?

My sooth! we'll frame a Covenant with the advancing tide.

To-morrow, when the dawn is chill, in Blednoch Bay we'll
see

What mild persuasion harbors in the cold kiss of the sea!"

A man is stricken to the earth by that strange voice of doom;
The mother pleads not—knows not—all is blackness in the
room;

As if suit with sudden blindness she goes groping from the
door,

And they hinder her to follow who shall see her face no more!
But the father! O the father! 't was a timid man and weak;

Complying still with every time, he had his faith to seek;

And now, within his heart and brain, a dreadful sound he hears,
A sound of rushing waters—but they find no vent in tears!

God help him! He hath need of prayer, and knows not how
to pray;

He gasps out vain appeals to men who scoff, and turn away;
Madly he grovels in the dust, in desperate anguish now,

Until he feels his Margaret's kiss, like dew upon his brow:

"God help thee, father! O this sight is pitiful to see!

Canst thou not give thy child for Him, who gave his Son for
thee?

Trust me, dear father, He is near, His promise to fulfil,

In passing through the waters He will be beside us still!"

—It is the solemn evening hour, the seal of that sad day,

And the rich purple of the hills, is blending all to gray;

And from the cloud thrones of the west the last bright gleam
hath fled,

And the moon riseth, white and wan, as a watcher o'er the
dead!

—Sits Gilbert Wilson by his hearth, one child beside his knee;

O cheaply ransomed with his all! a ruined man is he;

For his poor life, and those poor hoards, the Cross he dared to
shun,

All proffered now for his *two* barins, and they have bought him
one!

He sits beside his blackened hearth, unconscious of its gloom;

A chill hath gathered at his heart that mocks at that cold room.

There is no food upon the board, no kindled rush to guide

The gudewife at her nightly task of spinning by his side;

And saving that at times his hand, as if to prove her there,

Strays in the darkness, trembling, amid his Annie's hair;

And saving that the mother's moan at times will make him
start,

Ye might have deemed the mighty grief had burst the feeble heart!

O! prison bars are stark and strong to shut out light and air,
And yet the moonlight's sympathy—it stealeth even there;
A glory on the dungeon floor as on the free green sod:
A voiceless messenger of peace to souls at peace with God!
And Margaret sitteth in its beam, its radiance on her brow,
As though the crown she soon shall wear were brightening
o'er her now;

With folded hands upon her knee, and half suspended breath,
Listing to one who shares her cell and soon must share her
death!

A solemn place, a solemn time, for parted friends to meet;
Yet in their same extremity their communing is sweet;
And while in prayer and praise fleet by the watches of the
night,
Faith, like the moonbeam, enters in and floods the grave with
light!

Oh! youth and age, contrasted well, in mutual help ye blend;
This tells of the unchanging God—*that* of the Saviour friend;
One tramples life's new springing flowers for her Redeemer's
sake;
The other stays her age on Him who never can forsake! .

Long had they loved, as Christians love—those two so soon to
die;
And each the other greeted first, with weeping, silently.
The matron wept that that young life, so timelessly must cease;
The maiden that that honored head must not go down in peace.
But soon—oh, soon—it passed away, the coward thought and
base.

And each looked humbly, thankfully, into the other's face :
"Mother! He rules the awful sea with all its waters wild"—
"The many waters are His voice of love to thee, my child!"

—The guards are met; the stakes are set—deep, deep within
the sand;

One far toward the advancing tide, one nearer to the land;
And all along the narrow shore that girdles in the bay,
Small groups of anxious watchers come, as wane the stars
away!

Low lie the fog clouds on the hills, blank in their curtained
screen;

Each crest of beauty veils its brow, from that abhorred scene;
While eastward far, the straining eye, through mist and gloom,
may see

Large raindrops plashing heavily into a dull, sad sea!

—They come—they come—a distant sound!—a measured
marching, soon

On mail-clad men the dew drops rain from off thy woods,
Balloon!

The trodden grass, the trampled flowers—alas! poor emblems
they,

Of all a despot's iron heel was crushing down that day.
They shall revive! the harebell, see—uprears its crest again;
The falling dew hath cleansed anew its purity from stain;
And thus beneath the oppressor's tread, and hell's opposing
powers,

God's truth throughout the land shall spring—a sudden growth
of flowers!

Ah! little Margaret's playmates deemed, in childhood's frolic
glee,

What shadow of a coming hour still scared her at the sea;
The work is done! the strife is won! the conflict passed away;
Rule o'er these wrecks of human kind! and triumph if ye may!
High hearts once beat beneath the vest a Scottish peasant wears.
Go! seek them in their martyr graves! for these are not their
 heirs!

Only a seed the mountains keep, till God's good time shall
 come,
And the harvest, sown in blood and tears, be brought with
 shoutings home!

A sound—it cometh from the sea! and many a cheek is pale;
A freshening wind—and fast behind, that hurrying voice of
 wail:

“ Beshrew my heart!” cries Windram now; “ haste, comrades
 while ye may!

With Solway speed, I red your heed, the tide comes in to-day.
Now, mother, to the stake amain! your praying time is past;
Or pray the breakers, if ye will, they race not in so fast!”
Her grey hairs streaming on the wind, they bear her to the
 bay,

While nearer roars the hungry sea that ravens for its prey!

And Margaret stands, with cold clasped hands, that bitter
 sight to see;

And now toward her own death-place they guide her silently;
A sudden impulse swayed the crowd, as those young limbs
 were bound;

A moment's movement stilled as soon; a shiver through a
 wound!

And they have left her all alone with that strong sea before,
A prayer of faith's extremity faint mingling with its roar;

And on the eyes that cannot close, those grey hairs streaming
still;

While round about, with hideous rout, the wild waves work
their will!

“Ho! maiden! ho! what see'st thou there?” 'Tis Windram's
brutal voice:

“Methinks an early portion now were scarce beneath thy
choice!

Yon sea-birds, screaming in their glee, how low they swoop
to-day!

Now tell us, lass! what dainty cheer allures them in the bay?”
A change hath passed on that young brow—a glow, a light
from heaven;

Above the sea, the lowering sky to her seems glory riven:

“It is my Saviour wrestling there in those poor limbs I see;
He who is strength in death to her hath strength in death for
me!”

And sudden, from those parted lips, rich tones of triumph
come.

Her fear is past; she stands, at last, superior to her doom!
And strains, in midnight watchings learned, on many a blasted
heath,

Swell slowly, solemnly, to heaven—the anthem of her death;
Strange sweetness vibrates on the gale. It rises o'er the sea
As though an angel choir prolonged that thrilling harmony!
And still the song of faith and praise swells louder, clearer yet,
While to her feet the foam wreaths curl, and the dry sand
grows wet!

—A yell! it echoes from the hills! it peaeth to the sky!
Startling wild creatures of the woods with its wild agony;

And bounding on from rock to rock, with gaunt arms tossed
to heaven,

And maniac gestures, scaring still the crowd before him driven,
A haggard man hath gained the bay, with blood-shot eyes and
wild;

And cast him down at Windram's feet, and shrieked, "My
child! my child!"

Poor Margaret heard, as died her song, in one convulsive gasp,
And the rushing waters bound her in the terror of their clasp?

"My child! my child! she shall not die—I've gold, I've gold,"
he cried;

"I found one heart that pitied me, though all were stone be-
side.

Ye said that for a hundred pounds, the oaths' ye'd proffer
still—

Spare the young life! she'll take your tests! I know, I know
she will!"

Dark Windram glanced upon the gold; he glanced upon the sea:

"Laggard, thou comest late," he said, "she might have lived
for me!"

But two strong swimmers at the word plunge headlong in the
wave;

They reach the stake—the cords they break—not, not too late
to save!

And women throng to chafe her hands and raise her drooping
head,

Dropping warm tears on the cold brow, so calm, so like the
dead,

While that poor father, crouching near, creeps shuddering to
her feet,

And steals his hand up to her heart to count its earliest beat!
Just then, athwart two glooming clouds the morning sun made
way,
Lighting a glory on the wave, a sunbow in the spray;
And up the hills the mist wreaths rolled, revealing half their
frame,
And Margaret in the gleam awoke and breathed her Saviour's
name!

Dark Windram turned him on his heel; he paced apart awhile:
“Oh for the heart of Claver'se now—to do this work and
smile!

Come, girl, be ruled! thou'st proved enough, methinks, yon
bitter brine;

We'll find the partans fitter food than these young limbs of
thine!

Hold off, and let me near to her! beshrew this snivelling ring.
Ho, lass! stand up upon thy feet, and pray, ‘God save the
king!’”

“To die unsaved were horrible,” she said, with low sad voice;
“Oh yes! God save him if he will! the angels would rejoice!”

Then up he sprang, that trembling man, low cowering at her
feet:

“’Tis said—’tis said—my blessed bairn! those words of life
repeat!”

And Windram signalled with his hand, and rose a shout on
high;

Strange blessings on the tyrant's head!—but ere it reached the
sky,

A miscreant foul hath stopped its course, and baulked the
echoes near;

They could not catch a sound that died like curses on the ear!
A spare, mean man, with shuffling gait, hath pressed before
the rest:

“ ’Tis well to pray ‘ God save the King;’ but will she take the
Test?”

And Windram looked into his face and cursed his civil sneer.
He knew him for the tool of Grahame—his spy, and creature
there;

A curate’s brother creeping up, in those ill times, to place;
Trained in apostasy from God to all things vile and base!

“ Well! well! Sir Provost, work your will; this gear is to your
mind.

For me, I’d rather fight with men, than choke this woman
kind;

Bid her abjure the Covenant—none better knows the how!
There’s scarce an oath on either side but you have gulped ere
now!”

Smooth smiling stood the provost forth; no chaffing stirred
his blood. *

Something he muttered of “ King James,” “ the law,” and
“ public good;”

And then, as angry brows grew dark, and women muttered
loud,

He shrank towards the soldiery, as though he feared the crowd!
Dear Margaret, baulk this bloodhound yet! O spare thy
father’s woe!”

She started from their clasping arms—“ I may not!—let me go!
I am the child of Christ,” she said; “ Lord! break this snare
for me!”

And Windram turned his face aside, and pointed to the sea!

—They will not cease—they will not sleep, those voices of the wave;

For ever, ever whispering, above the martyr's grave;

'Tis heard at night, 'tis heard at noon—the same low wailing song;

In murmur loud, in cadence low—"How long, O Lord, how long!"

A cry against thee from the tide! O tyrant, banned of Heaven!
It meets the blood-voice of the earth, and answer shall be given!

A little while—the cup fills fast; it overflows for thee;
And thine extremity shall prove the vengeance of the sea!

Ay! gnash thy teeth in impotence! the fated hour is come;
And ocean, with her strength of waves, bears the avenger home;

See! eager thousands throng the shore, to hail the advancing fleet,

While baffled Dartmouth vainly strives that heaven-sent foe to meet.

And post on hurrying post crowds fast, with tidings of dismay
How the glassed waters lull to aid the landing of Torbay.

Away! prepare thy coward flight; thy sceptre scourge cast down.

The sea pursues thee with its curse, thou king without a crown!

PATRICK HAMILTON.

THE King is away to St. Dothess' shrine—
On a pilgrimage he's gone;
He hath left the Beaton's place and power,
And they'll burn young Hamilton.

Oh! young Hamilton, from beyond the sea
He hath strange new doctrines brought;
And our Father the Pope says: Such heretics
Are easier burned than taught!

He hath preached once—he hath preached twice,
And the people were fain to hear;
For, as rain on the new-mown grass, his voice
Comes down on the charmed ear.

And he tells us not, as our begging friars,
Of indulgence the price of gold;
But he speaks of a pardon, as sunlight free,
That can neither be bought nor sold.

And he tells us not of our Lady's grace,
By aves and penance won;

But he points the way to the Father's heart
Through the shed blood of the Son.

No crucifix in his hand he waves;
Nor relic nor chaplet wears;
And he spends no worship on dead men's bones,
No faith upon dead men's prayers.

All intercessors 'twixt earth and heaven,
Save Jesus—God's only One—
He would scatter, as marsh-raised mists are driven
From the path of the glorious sun.

And ever he reads in the Book of God,
As his very breath it were;
And, Oh! if his doctrine be heresy,
'Tis strange he should find it there!

And ever some burthened souls and poor
Avouch that his words are sooth.
And, oh! if his doctrine be heresy,
Dear Lord! that it were but truth!

—They have lured him on to St. Andrew's town
With their cunning words and fair;
In the dead of the night, when good men sleep,
They have seized and bound him there.

—James Beaton he sits on his throne of state,
And David he sits beside;
Was never a bloodier Prelate yet,
Trained on by a bloodier guide.

And knights and nobles all around—
This world with its braverie;

It pranked not thus in the path of Him
Whose throne was the cursed tree.

And young Hamilton stands in his light of youth,
With his calm and holy brow;
And it seems as the Father's name of love
Were beaming from it now.

But once he spake as his doom they signed,
When Cassilis' young Earl drew near;
"God charge not my blood on thy soul, poor child,
And forgive who brought thee here!"

—They have hasted down by the College wall;
With fagots they pile the sod;
But there are sore hearts for the blood of kings—
Sore hearts for the truth of God.

And many are gazing in silent awe,
With thoughts that they may not speak;
As men who awaken to feel a chain
Erewhile they must die or break!

The friars are mustered—white, grey, and brown—
A motley, exulting band;
But all eyes are turned on one Black Friar
Who strides at the Martyr's hand—

"Convert!" "Convert!" cried the Black Friar,
"And sue for our Lady's grace!"
But ever the light of that holy brow
Chased the life-blood from his face!

Yet he set as a stone his cold grey eye,
And he fixed his cold white face;

And louder he calmored—"Convert!" "Convert!"

"And sue for our Lady's grace!"

—One moment that death procession paused,

For a cry rose hoarse and wild,

As an old man burst through the serried crowd,

And wept like an orphaned child.

Full gently his hand did the martyr lay

On that old man's hoary brow :

"Good friend, thou didst never forsake me yet,

And thou hast not failed me now!"

—"These weeds in the fire will not profit me—

But thee they may profit still;

And weep not so sore for thy master's doom—

He but bears his Master's will!

• But remember thou, and remember all,

Good countrymen, standing near—

Christ Jesus our Lord will deny in heaven

Who shall shrink to own him here.

"And sorrow no more for the young life quenched

At a priestly tyrant's nod.

No hurt is theirs in the sevenfold fire,

Who walk with the Son of God!"

Still "Convert!" "Convert!" roared the Black Friar,

As they bound him to the stake;

But he met a glance from the Martyr's eye,

And it made the Black Friar shake!

"Thou evil man! in thy heart of hearts

Thou art witnessing a lie :

•

To me hast thou owned, that for God's good truth
I am called this day to die!

"To His judgment-seat I appeal thee now
Thy doom at His hand to take!"

There fell a mist on the Black Friar,
And he staggered from the stake!

The dry wood crackled—the flame rose high—
One groan from the breathless crowd;
But a voice came forth from the mantling fire
As a trumpet, clear and loud.

"How long, O my God! shall this darkness brood?
How long wilt Thou stay Thine hand?
Now gather my soul to its rest with Thee,
And shine on my native land!"

As the flame rose higher, the day-light paled
With a wan and sickly light;
And an old man sat by the blackened sod—
Alone—in the dews of night!

But a few brief vigils had barely flown
Since that martyr passed to heaven,
When the Black Friar died a despairing man,
His brain all frenzy-riven!

And even amid his dark-stoled feres
Did the whispered word pass on:
"He is gone, to meet at the bar of God
With Patrick Hamilton!"

And one who dared mutter a biting gibe
In the Primate's ear—quoth he,

“When ye next shall burn, my good lord, I pray,
In a deep vault let it be!

“For it seemeth as if the clouds of heaven
Dropped heresy with their dew;
And the smoke of young Patrick Hamilton
Hath infected where'er it blew!”

THE DEATHBED OF RUTHERFORD.

Tread lightly through the darkened room, for a sick man lieth
there,
And, 'mid the dimness, only stirs the whispered breath of pray-
er;
As anxious hearts take watch by turns beside the lowly bed,
Where sleep the awful stillness wears that soon must wrap the
dead!

Hours hath he known of fevered pain, but now his rest is calm,
As though upon the spirit worn distilled some healing balm.
It may be that his dreaming ear wakes old accustomed words,
Or drinks once more the matin song of Anworth's "blessed
birds!"*

O! green and fresh upon his soul, those early haunts arise.
His kirk, his home, his wild wood walk, with all their mem-
ories;

* Only I think the sparrows and swallows that build their nests in the kirk of Anworth, "blessed birds."—RUTHERFORD'S LETTERS.

The very rushing of the burn, by which so oft he trod,
The while on eagle wings of faith his spirit met its God!
A smile hath brightened on his lip—a light around his brow.
Oh! surely, “words unspeakable,” that dreamer listeth now;
And glories of the upper sky, his raptured senses steep,
Blent with the whispers of His love who gives His loved ones
sleep!

But hark!—a sound!—a tramp of horse!—a loud, harsh wrangling din!

Oh! rudely on that dream of heaven, this world hath broken in.

In vain affection’s earnest plea—the intruders forward press;
And with a struggling spasm of pain, he wakes to consciousness!

Strange lights are streaming through the room; strange forms
are round his bed.

Slowly his dazzled sense takes in each shape and sound of
dread—

“False traitor to thy country’s laws and to thy sovereign lord,
I summon thee to meet thy doom, thou felon Rutherford!”

Feebly the sick man raised his hand—his hand so thin and
pale,

And something in the hollow eye, made that rude speaker
quail:

“Man! thou hast sped thine errand well! yet is it wasted
breath,

Except the great ones of the earth can break my tryst with
death!

“A few brief days, or briefer hours and I am going home

Unto mine own prepared place where but few great ones come.
And to the judgment seat of Him, who sealed me with His
seal;

'Gainst evil tongues, and evil men, I make my last appeal!

“A traitor was His name on earth! a felon's doom His fate.
Thrice welcome were my Master's cup, but it hath come too
late.

The summons of that mightiest King, to whom all kings must
bow,

Is on me for an earlier day—is on me even now!

“I hear—I hear—the chariot wheels, that bring my Saviour
nigh;

For me He bears a golden crown—a harp of melody;

For me He opens wide His arms—He shows His wounded
side—

Lord! 'tis my passport into life! I live—for Thou hast died!”

They give his writings to the flames; they brand his grave
with shame;

A hissing in the mouth of fools becomes his honored name;
And darkness wraps awhile the land, for which he prayed and
strove,

But blessed in the Lord his death, and blest his rest above!

THE MARTYR'S CHILD.

[The martyr to whom reference is here made is James Guthrie, whose last words were, "The Covenants! the covenants shall yet be Scotland's reviving." In the story of his life, as told by the Rev. Thomas Thomson, is the following passage which Mrs. Menteath has made the subject of her touching poem: "James Guthrie had a son named William, about four or five years old; so young, indeed, and therefore so ignorant of the dismal tragedy that was approaching, that James Cowie (Mr. Guthrie's servant, precentor, and amanuensis) could scarcely detain him from playing in the streets on the day of his father's execution. Guthrie, whose soul yearned over his boy, so soon to become an orphan, took him upon his knee and gave him such advices as were suited to his capacity. He bade him to become serious—to become religious—and to be sure to devote himself to that honest and holy course in which his father had walked to the death. 'Willie,' he said, 'they will tell you, and cast up to you, that your father was hanged; but think not shame of it, for it is upon a good cause.' After the execution, the head was set up on the Nether

Bow Port as a spectacle for the finger of scorn to point at. But among those who repaired thither, and looked up at the long grey hairs rustling in the wind, and the features embrowning and drying in the sun, one little boy was often seen gazing fixedly upon that countenance with looks of love and terror—and still returning, day after day, and hour after hour, as if there was for him a language in that silent head which none else could hear. And who could that child be but Guthrie's young son—the little 'Willie' of the Martyr's last affectionate counsels and cares? His love of playing in the streets was now over; a new occupation had absorbed him; and as he returned from these pilgrimages, we may conceive with what feelings his mother heard him when, on her anxious inquiry as to where he had been, his usual reply was, 'I have been seeing my father's head!' The dying admonitions of the departed parent, enforced by such a solemnizing spectacle, seem to have sunk deep into William's heart; for it was observed that after his father's death, he spent much time in solitude, and was often employed in prayer. Resolving to walk in his father's steps, he directed his studies to the Church, and became a scholar of excellent promise; but he died in early youth, when he was entering upon trials to be licensed as a preacher."]

O, the sunrise! the sunrise hath wondrous power
To gladden all living things;
It breaks on the chill night's mirkiest hour.
Like a smile from the King of kings!
'Tis earliest June, and the earth hath thrilled
With the earnest of summer given;

And the very city's self is filled
With the breath and the beam of heaven!

A glory is circling the stern dark brow
Of Dunedin's fortress old,
And a gleam is waking, more faintly now,
Her Tolbooth prison-hold,
Where one hath risen, but not from sleep,
To gaze on that dawning sky—
“True wife! what aileth thee now to weep?
Heaven brightens ere I die!”

There are mustering groups in the silent streets
That are silent no longer now;
Though briefly each other his fellow greets,
As with doubting on his brow!
It seemeth as if an anguish pressed
Alike on a nation's heart—
One mighty load—upon every breast,
Which yet each must bear apart!

And still in its joy, o'er that joyless throng,
The brightening day-dawn smiled;
While threading the crowd's dense maze along,
Came an old man, and a child;
The man was woe-worn past all relief;
The child's young brow was fair—
So sunny, it seemed that no frost of grief
Could linger a moment there!

And onward he tripped at the old man's side,
With many a step for one;

And smiled in the face of his ancient guide,
As to bid his grief begone!
And still as the sunbeam before him danced
On the shade of the narrow street,
His little hands he would clap, entranced.
And chase it with eager feet!

“O whist ye, my bairn,” said the old man then;
“And is this a time for play?
Your hairs may be white, ere the half ye’ll ken
Of the loss ye shall thole this day!”
“Ye said I should look in my father’s face.
And sit on my father’s knee.
Long, long he has lain in yon darksome place.
But I know he’ll come home with me!”

“O whist ye, my bairn,” quoth the old man still:
“For a better home he’s bound.
But first he must suffer his Master’s will,
And lie in the chill, damp ground!”
The child looked wistfully up again:
“His master is God on high;
He sends the sun, and He stays the rain;
He’ll make it both warm and dry!”

--They have entered in by the dismal door;
They have mounted the weary stair;
And the mirth of the young child’s heart is o’er,
For no sunbeam follows there!
With a shuddering dread, as the harsh key grates,
By the old man’s side he clings;
But he hears a voice, and no longer waits—
To his father’s heart he springs!

“My child! my own child! am I clasping thee now?

My God, all Thy will be done!”

And he whom no terror of earth could bow,*

Rained tears upon his son!

“Now rest thee, my Willie, upon my knee,

For thy father's hours are brief;

And store up my words, with thy love for me,

Engraved on thy heart's first grief!

“They will tell thee, my bairn, that thy father died

A death both of sin and shame;

And the finger of scorn, and the foot of pride,

Will be busy with my name.

But heed them not, boy! for the cause of God

I render this day my breath;

And tread thou the path that thy father trode,

Though it lead to thy father's death!”

“For my Master's honor, my Master's Crown,

A martyr 'tis mine to be;

And the orphan's God shall look kindly down.

My pleasant child, on thee!

I seal thee now with my parting kiss,

Till at His right hand we meet.

Death! death! thy bitterest drop is this,

All else in thy cup is sweet!”

The child clings close to his father's heart,

But they bear him by force away—

A gentle force; but they needs must part,

And that old man guides his way.

* Characterized by Cromwell as “the short man who would not bow.”

Once more they are treading the crowded street,
But no longer the sunlight smiled;
And looks of pity from some they meet,
For they know the martyr's child!

“Yon darksome thing that shuts out the sky,
O tell me what may it be?
It scares my heart, though I know not why,
For it seems to gloom on me!”
With a quivering lip, and a thrill of awe,
Was the old man's answer given:
“’Tis a ladder, poor bairn, such as Jacob saw,
By which angels mount to heaven!”

—They have set his head on the Nether Bow,
To scorch in the summer air;
And months go by, and the winter's snow
Falls white on its thin grey hair.
And still the same look that in death he wore,
Is sealed on the solemn brow—
A look as of one who hath travailed sore,
But where pangs are ended now!

Through years of oppression, and blood, and shame.
The earth as a wine-press trode—
That silent witness abides the same,
In its mute appeal to God!
And many a saint hath waxed strong to bear,
While musing in that sad place;
And the heart of the tyrant hath failed for fear,
In the awe of the still, stern face.

There were prophet-words on those lips in death,
That Scotland remembers still;

And she looks for her God's awakening breath,
Through the long, long night of ill!
“They may scatter their dust to the winds of heaven—
To the bounds of the utmost sea;
But her Covenants, burned, reviled, and riven,
Shall yet her reviving be!”

—There sitteth a child by the Nether Bow
In the light of the summer sky;
And he steals there yet in the winter's snow.
But he shuns the passers by;
A fair, pale child, with a faded cheek,
As a lily in darkness reared,
And an eye, in its sad abstraction meek,
As if nothing he hoped or feared!

In the early dawn, at the fall of eve,
But not in the noon of day;
And he doth not weep, and he doth not grieve,
But he never was seen to play!
A child in whom childhood's life is dead;
Its sweet light marred and dim;
And he gazes up at that awful head,
As though it held speech with him!

Oh! a strange, sad sight, was the converse mute
Of the dead and the living there;
And thoughts in that young child's soul took root
Which manhood might scarcely bear!
But ever he meekly went his way,
As the stars came o'er the place;
And his mother wept, as she heard him say,
“I have seen my father's face!”

Years faded and died, and the child was gone,
But a pale youth came instead,
In the solemn eve, and at early dawn,
To gaze on the awful head!
And oft when the moonlight fell in showers,
He would linger the night long there;
And his spirit went up through those silent hours
To his father's God in prayer!

The shadow had passed from his heart and brow,
And a deep calm filled his breast;
For the peace of God was his portion now,
And his weary soul had rest!
The martyr's God had looked kindly down
On the martyr's orphan son;
And the spirit had sealed him for His own,
And his goal was almost won!

There was fond hope cherished and earnest given,
Of a course like his father's high;
But the seed that had ripened so soon for heaven,
God gathered to the sky!
He comes no more to the 'customed place;
In vain would affection save.
He hath looked his last on his father's face,
And he lies in his mother's grave!

JAMES DODDS.

AUTHOR OF "LAYS OF THE COVENANTERS."

[The following narrative is condensed from the Memoir prepared by the Rev. James Dodds, of Dunbar, Scotland, a cousin of the poet, and prefixed to the edition of "Lays of the Covenanters" published in Glasgow in 1880.]

JAMES DODDS, the author of the following poems and of other writings of undoubted merit, was born on the 6th of February, 1813, at Softlaw, in the parish of Sprouston, near Kelso. Having lost his father when he was a mere child, his early training was left to his mother, a warm-hearted and excellent woman, who had soon reason to rejoice in the opening powers and promising character of her son. But the person who exercised most influence on his youth, and whom he always regarded with unbounded veneration, was his grandfather, under whose roof he and his mother lived during his earliest years. That venerable relative, after whom he was named, was indeed one of the finest conceivable specimens of a class of worthies in humble life for which Scotland was once famous. He was a man of

singular piety and gravity of character, of great intelligence, and gentleness of disposition. He had a love of reading, and a taste for wholesome religious literature, which greatly added to his mental stores, and gave him a high authority among his neighbors. He was a member of the Secession Church in its best, or at least most primitive days, and took a deep interest in all matters that concerned the spiritual improvement of the nation, and the spread of the Gospel in heathen lands. In spiritual intelligence and mental development he was far in advance of his neighbors.

The youth, thus trained at the side of such a saintly character, soon displayed a measure of intelligence that excited the admiration of all his companions. Little is recorded of the first schools he attended, but it is certain that he displayed in his earliest years a wonderful aptitude for learning, and a precocity of talent quite extraordinary. He made verses, and recited sermons in the hearing of his companions, when he was quite a child. His imagination, fired by old ballads and border tales, suddenly acquired great power, and lifted him into an ideal world. He would often gallop about from place to place on an imaginary steed, and then astonish the rustic minds of the people around him by thrilling narratives of battles with wild beasts and encounters with savage men. These marvellous creations of his child-brain were for the time as real to him as life itself. At other times he would gather round him a miscellaneous audience to listen to his harangues or sermons on scriptural subjects, modelled, for the most part, after the discourses he heard from the pulpit. Yet what struck many of his more intelligent hearers was not the liveliness of his fancy, but the maturity of his understanding. The wonder of the sages of the hamlet was that one so young

could speak on subjects so important with the gravity and sobriety that belong to riper years.

Before he was much above thirteen years of age he had read and mastered many of the works of Dr. Johnson, and, what is more remarkable still, had grappled with Bishop Warburton's "Divine Legation of Moses." And so thoroughly did he enter into the spirit of these great writers that he actually, in his youthful enthusiasm, admired their very faults. Their dogmatism and arrogance he would often, more in earnest than in jest, praise and even imitate. The educated persons he became acquainted with were often amused to hear the rustic but precocious youth talk in the pompous language of Johnson, argue sometimes in his playful, sometimes in his surly style, and lay down the law most dogmatically on some difficult question. Warburton's controversial arrogance seemed to be a high merit in his eyes, and he enthusiastically praised the argument of the Divine Legation, splendid paradox as it is now admitted to be. But these fits of admiration and imitation he afterwards regarded as the intellectual frolics of his youth, the ebullitions of a mind that wanted the firm guidance of some accomplished preceptor. Indeed, looking back to his early days, he often described himself as self-willed, passionate, and proud, apt to assert his independence in an extravagant way, to rebel against salutary restraint, and even to indulge in the language of sarcasm, which is so unbecoming in the mouth of the young. These strange characteristics of his youth, however, were accompanied with singular warmth and generosity of heart, which gained him friends and conciliated enemies.

Like many a scottish youth who has risen from poverty to a good, or even eminent position in the world, James

Dodds betook himself to the teaching of a humble country school. He did not reach, or perhaps aim at, the position of a parochial schoolmaster, an important personage in those days. An assistantship in a superior school, or a tutorship in a gentleman's family, even had either of these posts been within his reach, would probably not have suited his very independent spirit. As matters stood, he accepted the situation of teacher of a small adventure-school at a farm-place, in the parish of Smailholm, six miles north-west from Kelso.

That farm-place was Sandyknowe, celebrated in connection with the early life of Sir Walter Scott. Nearly sixty years before, that child of genius had spent the opening dawn of his life, or, as he has himself informed us, "awoke to the first consciousness of existence," at Sandyknowe, near which stands Smailholm's ruined tower, now immortalised in his song. That farm belonged to Walter Scott's paternal grandfather, but it had in former times been the property of a distinguished Border family, the Pringles of Whytbank. Brought out of Edinburgh, a lame and somewhat sickly child, for the benefit of the pure country air, the future great minstrel of the Border had his young imagination excited by the most romantic scenery in the Lowlands of Scotland. Lying at the foot, or perched on the summit of Smailholm Tower, when yet a mere child emerging out of helpless infancy, he could gaze on a landscape rich in natural beauty, and studded over with hills, and towers, and famous spots rendered classic by the deathless power of poetry. In his introduction to the third canto of *Marmion* the minstrel thus sings of Smailholm's ancient border keep:—

“Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charmed my fancy’s wakening hour.
It was a barren scene and wild
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green.
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wallflower grew,
And honeysuckle loved to crawl
Up the low crag and ruined wall.”

Almost beneath the shadow of Smailholm Tower, James Dodds opened his rustic school, and began a career of steady labour and manly industry from which he never afterwards deviated. For nearly four years did the youthful schoolmaster occupy this humble position; and though fit for something far higher, he cheerfully went through a round of toil that many lads like himself would have found most irksome.

Having made up his mind that the profession of the law would best suit his talents and his aims in life, James Dodds left Sandyknowe in March, 1836, and bound himself apprentice for five years to Mr. Scott a writer or solicitor, residing at Abbotsmeadow, in the immediate vicinity of Melrose. As an apprentice or clerk of a country legal practitioner he passed the next five years of his life, and went through a vast amount of ill-remunerated toil which he never looked back upon with any satisfaction. He applied himself, however, with remarkable industry to the endless copying of dry law papers, and the mastering of the principles and details of Scotch law.

While Mr. Dodds was thus toiling at the oar in a country writer’s office, he forgot not the claims of literature, and was also drawn into the turmoil of provincial pol-

ities. He read the English classic authors, especially Shakespeare, with great avidity, and even made them the subjects of critical study. He actually prepared and delivered lectures on a number of Shakespeare's plays and leading characters, illustrating them with appropriate recitations, which added greatly to their popular effect. His audiences often consisted chiefly of plain country people, who knew little of Shakespeare but what he told them in his own dramatic style. "It was amazing," says Mr. Brockie, "to see how he fascinated the douce old wives of Gattonside by his Shakespearian recitations. Many who had never read a play in their lives, and who would not for the world have crossed the threshold of a theatre, went to hear Mr. Dodds recite and comment night after night, and always came away delighted, as well as instructed." It appears, indeed, that the ardent lecturer and reciter contemplated at this time the preparation of a series of studies on Shakespeare for publication in some magazine. His purpose, perhaps never seriously formed, soon passed from his mind; and, meanwhile, literature with him gradually gave way to politics.

At this period the agitation excited by the great Reform movement of 1831-32 was still strong in Scotland, a country which had just been awakened to a new political life. On the Scottish Border, and in such towns as Galashiels, Hawick, and Jedburgh, political feeling ran high, and Liberalism was in the ascendant. The young clerk, budding into a lawyer, and aiming at public life, joined with all his heart the Liberal party, and soon distinguished himself as a speaker at political meetings. He was by education and conviction a Scottish Whig of a pronounced character; but, like a true Whig of that class, he never adopted subversive prin-

ciples, and always advocated the cause of progress and reform within the lines of the British Constitution. In what are now called the Border Burghs, which, since their enfranchisement, have been represented by a distinguished Liberal, the nephew and the biographer of Lord Macaulay, Mr. Dodds won no small reputation as an eloquent champion of popular rights. On various exciting occasions he swayed the multitude by his bold denunciation of oppression and advocacy of liberty. He sympathised always deeply and sincerely with the working classes, and often described his chief mission in the world to be the defence of their rights. Accordingly, when he spoke in public he never failed to strike a responsive chord in the poor man's heart, and to cheer him with the hope of better days. His popularity in the burghs was as great as it was honestly acquired. It was never sought for from unworthy motives and it never served to alleviate the deep poverty in which his life at this time was passed. He was one of the most generous and disinterested of popular champions. From first to last he acted from the purest aims, and showed a noble superiority to the money power.

In 1841, soon after the expiry of his apprenticeship at Abbotsmeadow, Mr. Dodds went to Edinburgh in order to push his way in his profession. Mr. Scott, on parting with him, bore testimony to "the faithful, honest, and becoming manner in which he had performed his duties," and expressed an earnest hope "that his talents, qualifications, and disinterested singleness of heart might conduce to his success in life." The young lawyer soon found employment in the office of Mr. Maurice Lothian, a gentleman well known in the legal circles of Edinburgh. He enjoyed the benefit of the recommendations of the Rev.

Dr. Aitken and other Roxburghshire friends interested in his success, and possessing some influence with the Liberal party. Mr. Lothian, who still survives, remembers well the arrival in town of young Mr. Dodds from Melrose, and the good impression he made on every one by his character and ability. He also states that at the time "he was sure the genius of the lad would not long submit to the drudgery of a clerk." But Mr. Dodds, from his first commencement of work in Edinburgh, was determined to shrink from no drudgery that might commend him to his employers, and serve to plant his foot firmly on the ladder of promotion.

It may here be stated that before he went to Edinburgh Mr. Dodds was married to Miss Janet Pringle, with whom he had become acquainted at Abbotsmeadow, and who, though considerably younger than himself, turned out to be the very wife he needed to promote his comfort and happiness. His marriage was thought by some of his friends to be hasty and improvident, but it was, in the end, the source of the purest domestic happiness. Mrs. Dodds, during the whole period of her wedded life, entirely sympathised with her husband, attended wisely to his household affairs, and even assisted him in his literary undertakings. Her instinctive taste and judgment were greatly deferred to by her husband as he penned his poems and prepared his lectures. When she condemned, he was more than doubtful of the merit of his compositions; when she approved, he was satisfied that he had produced something that would stand the test. As a wife, a friend, and the mother of his children, she was nearly all to him that a woman can be to a man; and she has survived him to cherish his memory, and to take an intelligent interest in the preparation of this faith-

ful, though imperfect, record of his life and labours. [So the author modestly terms his admirable biography.]

About the year 1844, Mr. Dodds began to study in a special manner the history of the Scottish Covenanters. In his boyhood he had admired the martyrs of the Covenant, and their noble struggles for religious liberty. But it was only now that he deeply studied the literature of the period in which they lived, and made himself familiar with the records of their lives and sufferings. The result was, that the characters of these spiritual heroes fired his imagination, and woke to new life within him the spirit of poetry which had often possessed him from his youth. From that period much of his reading consisted of works bearing on the ecclesiastical history of Scotland, from the era of the Reformation to the great persecution of the Presbyterians, which began with the restoration of Charles II. in 1660, and only terminated at the revolution of 1688. As he strove to realize the features of the Covenanting times, and especially the heroic spirit of the Covenanters, his thoughts and feelings flowed almost imperceptibly into the mould of poetry ; and hence the origin of these beautiful and stirring Lays given in this volume.

From 1845 to 1847, a succession of " Lays of the Covenanters," all of the same stamp, and possessing the highest merit, were contributed by Mr. Dodds to the *Free Church Magazine*, and also to *Lowe's Edinburgh Magazine*, a periodical which existed at that period, though soon after it was discontinued. These effusions attracted much attention as they appeared, though the name of the author was not generally known. The best judges have declared that they will stand a comparison with Aytoun's once popular " Lays of the Cavaliers." Indeed, I have always thought

that in point of polish, fire, and sincerity, they are far superior to these belauded productions of the Edinburgh professor. The public will now have the opportunity, for the first time, of calmly forming a judgment of their merits as a series of poems illustrating a most characteristic period of Scottish history. That they breathe a fine spirit of poetry, piety, and patriotism, and also give in a lively manner the very "form and pressure" of the Covenanting times, will be admitted even by many judges who are not in entire sympathy with their author. Nor is that Scotchman or Presbyterian to be envied who can read them without any admiration of the bloody but finally victorious struggles of the enthusiastic and dauntless children of the Covenant.

These "Lays of the Covenanters" were not written rapidly, or with that bold negligence which sometimes marks poetic inspiration. Their author studied carefully his themes before he attempted to embalm them in verse. He laboriously collected all the information about them which lay within his reach, that he might realize them more vividly in his own mind, and present them with corresponding liveliness to others. He also corrected what he had written with incessant care ; and however accurate his manuscript was when sent to the printer, the proof was sure to be returned with many important alterations. These alterations were invariably for the better, and generally in the way of condensation. But Mr. Dodds, whether he expressed his thoughts in prose or in verse, was a very careful and conscientious writer. He had no ambition to compose with rapidity, and never boasted of the ease with which he could write a poem or an essay. Some of his ordinary letters were even written with uncommon

pains ; and the popular lectures which he prepared and delivered during the latter part of his life, were the fruits of much careful and industrious research. Though irresolution and procrastination often marked his conduct through life, no man ever brought a greater amount of dogged perseverance to a task he had once deliberately undertaken. A lecture which he could easily have prepared sufficiently well in a few days, often cost him weeks of hard reading and sustained intellectual as well as manual toil.

Towards the close of 1846, Mr. Dodds removed from Edinburgh to London, in order to commence business as a Scottish Parliamentary agent. He had by this time acquired great knowledge and valuable experience in the office of Messrs. Lockhart, Hunter, & Whitehead. He had mastered all the ordinary details of Scottish legal practice, and was no stranger to the general principles of law. His acuteness, his penetration, and his knowledge of human nature also helped to qualify him for that branch of the legal profession which he now adopted. Both Mr. Hunter and Mr. Whitehead acted by him in the most generous manner on this occasion. Without their assistance and patronage he could not safely have undertaken the risk of establishing himself in London. Being also a married man, he required all the help and encouragement in his new line of life which kind friends could offer, or himself could properly receive.

It has been already stated that Mr. Dodds, when writing and publishing in periodicals his poems on Covenanting themes, made a special study of the history of the Scottish Covenants and their heroic adherents. By means of genuine historical research, he strove hard to realise the

scenes and times to which his poetical outpourings referred. Even after he had ceased to write *Lays of the Covenanters*, he continued, at his leisure, to prosecute that line of study which always had for him a strong fascination. He read critically all books of Scottish Church History that fell into his hands, and made a special effort to get access to works of original or standard authority. Still further to enliven his conceptions of the Covenanters and their struggles, he visited, during his autumnal journeys in Scotland, many scenes made famous by the battles and martyrdoms of the religious patriots whom he so sincerely admired.

Certain regions in the Lowlands of Scotland were specially attractive to him, as being the native homes or chosen haunts of the men of the Covenant. These are Lanarkshire and Ayrshire, with Dumfrieshire, Wigton and Kirkcudbright that go by the name of Galloway. It so happened that calls of business frequently took him, between the years 1850 and 1860, down to Galloway, a region peculiarly rich in Covenanting memories. In Galloway he always enjoyed himself exceedingly, delighted with its fine mountain scenery, and solemnised by its lonely martyrs' graves.

While he thus nourished his intellect and imagination with the exciting materials supplied by his visits to Galloway, Mr. Dodds prosecuted with renewed relish his historical studies. The result was the preparation of a series of biographical papers, which he first delivered as popular lectures, and finally expanded into a volume. No compositions of the kind were ever written with greater fulness of heart, or with greater pains and industry. Mr. Dodds, while admiring the Covenanters, and their struggles for

liberty, was very careful to ascertain the truth concerning their principles and practices, the character of their leaders, and the proper bearing of the events that make up their history. He was no blind enthusiast in this matter, but a keen and thoughtful historical student, bent on doing justice alike to the persecuted and their persecutors. What he has written of the Covenanters has, therefore, a high value in the eyes of all impartial readers. He has never sunk the philosopher and the statesman in the Scotchman and Presbyterian in treating of men and struggles that peculiarly appeal to the prepossessions of most students of Scottish history.

In November, 1857, was inaugurated in the new cemetery at Stirling a statue to the memory of the martyr, James Guthrie. This noble monument to one of the greatest of Scotland's spiritual heroes was erected mainly through the liberality of the late Mr. William Drummond, an excellent man, who did honour to Stirling and his native land. Mr. Dodds was requested to deliver an inaugural address on the interesting occasion, and cheerfully undertook the honourable task. Standing beside the unveiled monument, and in presence of the magistrates and a great multitude of the citizens of Stirling, he dilated in magnificent style on Guthrie and his times, the principles of the British constitution, and the great liberties we now enjoy. Part of his estimate of Guthrie's character is as follows: "By whatever test we try him, we shall not hesitate to pronounce him the first man of his day, the first in talent, in weight of intellect, in fertility and decision of mind, in promptitude and force of action, in all that kind of intellectual aptitude and energy which rouses and sustains the people in their contests with despotism, and commands ultimate

success, though it may not be attained in the lifetime of the leader himself. . . . To his solid and brilliant qualities he added a character as spotless and lofty as humanity can attain to, or earth behold. No stain ever fell upon it, no breath of calumny ever assailed it. Hard things have been said of Knox and Melville, and some of them, I for one admit, deservedly. Against Henderson little has been alleged ; for he was grave, prudent, temperate, and subdued, and laid himself little open to the attacks of scandal ; yet against him also insinuations have been levelled. But against Guthrie the mouths of all the dogs of his time were silent. The chroniclers of scandal were dumb ; and his bitterest enemies always spoke respectfully of his character."

The address concludes with this splendid peroration, which is quite Demosthenic in style and spirit ; " Beside this monument, as an altar of freedom, let us plight our faith and swear our covenant to be the enemies of all that is false and slavish, the friends and promoters of all that is true, good, and free. Yes ! immortal spirit of the long-departed martyr ! I know not what are the laws of the spirit-land ; I know not in what part of the universe is the stately and beatific palace where thou dwellest ; I know not what are thy employments, or where is the circuit of thy flight. But I am persuaded, not from any certain facts, but from the promptings of feeling, and imagination, and sympathy, that thou still hast an interest in sublunary concerns ; that thou art not all lost in heavenly ecstacies, but still watchest that struggle for freedom in which thou didst fall a martyr. If then, immortal spirit ! thou art now hovering over us in this the scene of thy labours and griefs, thy loves and joys when in the flesh, bear witness ! that,

standing around this monumental stone, we devote ourselves to the maintenance of those principles for which thou didst die so nobly, and resolve rather ourselves to perish than survive the liberties of our country and our race.”

One of the results of the visits Mr. Dodds paid to friends in Galloway was his delivery at Wigtown of his lectures on the Covenanters. The lectures had the effect of giving new life to a movement originated in the place some years before for the erection of a monument to the “Wigtown Martyrs.” These martyrs have been peculiarly celebrated in the history of Scotland, and their very names are dear to all true Scottish Presbyterians. Margaret Lauchlison, a widow of sixty-three, and Margaret Wilson, a maiden of eighteen, in terms of a sentence of one of the Courts of the persecuting Government of the time, were drowned on the 11th of May, 1685, near Wigtown, at a place where the waters of the small river Blednoch mingle with the salt tide of the Solway. Both of the women met their doom with a quiet but exalted heroism. The younger of them, who was last put to death, especially showed a beautiful and pathetic Christian fortitude that has touched the hearts and bedewed the eyes of thousands since her day. All the leading historians who have given any account of these melancholy persecuting times in Scotland have failed not to record with gentle hand the tragedy of the tender but heroic Wigtown martyrs. It has been reserved for a Scottish lawyer of the present day, Mr. Mark Napier, the biographer of Graham of Claverhouse, known as Viscount Dundee, to deny the reality of the execution of the two women at Wigtown, and to heap upon their heads the coarsest ribaldry. But his attempt to gainsay the truth of history has signally failed, and the reality of the martyr-

dom has lately been proved afresh by a superabundance of authentic and consistent evidence.

On the 17th August, 1858, Mr. Dodds delivered an inaugural address at Wigtown on the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of a monument erected to the memory of the martyrs. An immense assemblage of people was gathered together from all parts of the surrounding country to witness the impressive ceremony, and to hear a vindication of the Covenanters. Mr. Dodd's speech was one of his greatest efforts. With a full heart he did justice to the two Galloway women who died for the truth, and then he splendidly expatiated on his favourite themes, the heroism of the Covenanters and their services to British liberty. Alluding to the attempts made by her executioners to shake the constancy of Margaret Wilson, and her simple, sublime bearing in the midst of her last trial, the orator said : " Dragged half-dead from the waters, she was urged again 'to pray for the king,' which then meant, as was well understood, to approve of, to bid God-speed to, the whole tyranny and iniquity and Antichristianism of the ruling powers. She had already been overwhelmed in the horrors of death ; the black devouring floods were hissing at her feet, as if greedy for their prey ; life, and the sweets of life, inviting her one way ; death, in one of his most wild and horrific forms, yawning to swallow her up the other way. Will not her heart fail ? Will not the strain upon her nerves be too great for her to bear ? Her mind must be bewildered. Surely for life, for sweet young life, she will grasp at any straw that is offered. Not so the holy, heavenly maiden. Amid the roar of the waves, the groans and lamentations of the people, the mingled flatteries and threats of the persecutors, and amid the awfulness of

the pains of death, half-endured, her intellect was calm and unclouded, her judgment firm and unshaken, her thoughts as clear, and her language as precise and careful as if she had been a professor in the chair of theology, and not a poor maiden of eighteen in the midst of her martyr agonies."

In 1861 Mr. Dodds published "The Fifty Years' Struggle of the Scottish Covenanters, 1638-1688." This work consisted of his lectures on the Covenanters, in an expanded and corrected form. The lectures, he confessed to his friends, had cost him a world of trouble; he had ransacked for them a whole department of the State Paper Office, had consulted in his investigations some fifty or sixty volumes, and had often toiled at the task of composition till one or even two o'clock in the morning. When the volume was being prepared for the press a similar variety of labour was gone through, so bent was he on giving freshness and accuracy to his narrative. The work, published first by an Edinburgh firm, was very favourably received, and more than justified the author's fame as a lecturer. It was afterwards transferred to a London publisher; and from first to last it has run through several editions. It is generally admitted to be one of the best books on the subject published in modern times, or indeed at any former period. The life-like accuracy of its sketches of the leading Covenanters and their persecuting opponents has struck every impartial reader. Indeed, the work is more a series of biographies, with picturesque description of events and the scenes in which they occurred, than a regular and connected history. The insight of the author into the men and the times he undertakes to describe shows a true historic genius; while the glow of his narrative, and the striking imagery that is ever at his command, bespeak the

spirit of an orator and poet. He never disguises his deep sympathy with the Covenanters, and always speaks of them as profoundly sincere, even when mistaken, as men of like passions and infirmities with ourselves, yet genuine religious patriots and valiant pioneers of modern British liberty. But while he takes the Scottish Presbyterian view of their characters and struggles, he writes of them like a philosopher and statesman of the present day. His is not a blind devotion to the noble old Covenanting cause. He aims rather at an intelligent appreciation of the men who upheld that cause, and, according to their light, defended it at the risk, or at the cost of life itself.

It was at one time Mr. Dodd's intention to prosecute still further his researches in Scottish ecclesiastical history, especially that portion of it which relates to the rise and progress of the Reformation. He actually, with a view probably to the issue of another volume, prepared two elaborate lectures on "The Crisis of the Scottish Reformation, 1557-1560." These he delivered at Moffat, in 1863, with great applause. "The audience," says a local reporter, "was spell bound as he detailed with the vividness of pictures the chief events of that glorious epoch. He described Mary of Lorraine, Mary Queen of Scots, the Duke of Chatelleraut, Maitland of Lethington, and other Lords of the Congregation, in words which made them almost seem to take life and bodily presence. Of Knox himself, the chief figure of his *tableaux*, every one could catch the very impress, and realise the very presence, from two scenes he described most effectively, the one in which the words, 'John Knox is come' are uttered in the Church of the Greyfriars, and the other presenting the preaching of the Reformer at Stirling. He clearly explained the state of Europe, and

specially of Scotland, the efforts made by Knox, with the difficulties his schemes encountered; and often he made the heart thrill and throb as he unveiled the course of Providence in our history. He exhibited a remarkable power of impressing his hearers with a weird feeling of reality. It was not merely the dim shadowy ghost of the Past that he called up, but its very self. As by some inexplicable magnetic influence, he carried one away whithersoever he would, without any apparent effort, more irresistibly than any other eminent lecturer of the day." This is high praise, but not numerited. In his best moods, when lecturing on a subject that appealed to the higher feelings, Mr. Dodds exhibited all that living action and transporting power which give the true orator an irresistible sway over his audience. He was never so much at home, never felt and spoke so like a man inspired, as when he introduced upon the scene the noble and picturesque though somewhat stern worthies of Scottish Church history.

Even in introducing the Covenanters to a London audience he stirred up that enthusiasm which springs from sympathy with heroic struggles for liberty. At the beginning of 1865, he was requested by the Rev. Newman Hall to deliver a lecture on the Covenanting times in Scotland, and to read, by way of illustration, a selection of his Lays, at a Monday evening meeting of the congregation. The entertainment was a splendid triumph. An audience of 3000 people listened in breathless attention both to the prose and the poetry of the lecturer, except when they could not restrain their sympathetic emotion. On various other occasions Mr. Dodds gave in London a similar lecture, with suitable poetical illustrations, and always with decided success. Had considerations of emolument chiefly swayed him

he might have turned his popular lectures of this kind to profitable account. But, though never a rich man, and for a large period of his life having a numerous family dependent upon him, he was no adept in attending to his own pecuniary interests, but let slip many excellent opportunities of honourably adding to his income. Yet the success of the popular reading of his *Covenanting Lays* increased his desire to publish them in a small volume, with appropriate notes and illustrations. He actually made considerable progress in maturing such a literary project; but from that inexplicable irresoluteness which in matters of this kind often came over him, he never took the final step, and let his enterprise of pith and moment suddenly drop.

Mr. Dodds's second and last publication of importance appeared in 1870. This was called "*Thomas Chalmers: a Biographical Study.*" He had projected a series of similar "*Studies,*" to consist mainly of appreciative sketches of eminent men of this century. He had certainly many qualities fitting him for such a task, such as subtle analytic skill, a fine power of word-painting, and a keen sympathy with everything morally grand and noble. He had also an exquisite eye for the winning weaknesses of great men, and the beautiful simplicity of genius. He could touch with genial hand the odd, the fantastic, and the humorous, as well as the solemn and the pathetic in human life and character. But this new project was not destined to call into play his peculiar powers. He was forced, indeed, by failing health and spirits, as well as by the pressure of outward circumstances, to give up more than one of his cherished literary schemes. Chalmers was the first and the last picture in his projected gallery of modern great men.

And a very complete and carefully-finished picture it is.

The artist had a life-long love and reverence for Chalmers, had heard him make one of his greatest speeches, and had watched his splendid philanthropic career from its meridian to its sudden close. It was with peculiar delight, therefore, that he found at last an opportunity of letting the world know what he thought of the greatest pulpit orator, and one of the noblest men of his time. In a small octavo volume, of 400 pages, he contrived to sketch in brief and bold outline the life of Chalmers, to describe the various fascinations of his genius, and to expatiate on the amount of noble work he did in his day. He acknowledges his great obligation to Dr. Hanna's admirable *Life of the great Christian philanthropist* ; but he introduces into the earlier part of his biography a quantity of interesting new material, for which he was mainly indebted to his friend Dr. Rogers, a native of Fife, and well acquainted with the land of Chalmers.

During the last ten years of his life, in spite of his abstemious habits and annual periods of recreation in the country, Mr. Dodd's health sensibly declined. Indeed, before he had been many years hard at work in London, he occasionally felt himself affected with dizziness, and other symptoms of a diseased or irregular action of the heart. At times he was alarmed about himself, as if his life might be suddenly cut short ; but for years his naturally robust constitution bore him safely through sundry rather serious attacks, and enabled him to do a vast amount of work with apparent impunity. As life advanced, however, and the demands upon his energies did not diminish, his bodily strength became visibly impaired, and his family grew anxious about the general state of his health. The toils of his profession, often of an anxious kind, severe literary work, which frequently kept him up

to a late hour of the night or an early hour of the morning, as well as the exposure, excitement, and fatigue connected with public lecturing, gradually weakened his bodily powers, and aggravated the ominous symptoms from which he had begun to suffer. He became, it may be said, another victim of that prevalent and fatal disease of the day, overwork. He wrought his brain too vigorously, and had too few intervals of rest. The usual consequences followed, heart disease, with its serious concomitants, and the painful apprehensions to which it gives rise.

In the summer of 1874, when, in spite of all the loving care of his family, his health became very weak and precarious, he received a kind invitation from Mr. T. Thornton, solicitor, Dundee, to pay him a lengthened visit, in order to try the effect of perfect rest and change of air. Mr. Thornton and he had long been closely connected by ties of business and friendship, and the invitation, so thoughtfully given, was at once accepted.

After spending a very happy day with all the members of their family that could be collected together, Mr. and Mrs. Dodds left London for Scotland on the 24th of August, and arrived comfortably at Carlisle, where they spent the night. Next day they went on to Dundee, where they were most kindly received by Mr. Thornton. Mr. Dodds was soon able to confer with that gentleman and other friends on matters of business, and seemed to improve daily in strength. After spending a few pleasant days in Dundee, he and Mrs. Dodds went up the country to Glenisla, to pay a visit to Mr. Thornton's brother-in-law, Mr. Peter Hean. Mr. Hean, who had considerably invited them to share with him for a while the delights of his residence in the Forfarshire Highlands, was a most atten-

tive host, and did everything possible to make the invalid's sojourn at Glenisla of a refreshing character. Mr. Thornton and his son joined the party, and helped to make the visit still more enjoyable. Reading, writing, talking by turns, and in a moderate measure, strolling out into the open air to explore and enjoy the romantic scenery of the place, inhaling with conscious enjoyment the pure mountain air, and abandoning himself in his own fashion to the prized society of dear friends, and the elevating spirit of the surrounding scene, Mr. Dodds made rapid progress in what all around him considered the path of recovery. He made several excursions with his friends to interesting places in the neighbourhood, one of which was Forter Castle, a ruined stronghold of the ancient clan of the Ogilvies. On the party being entertained at tea by the housekeeper of the tenant of the place, he was introduced by the Rev. J. Simpson, of Glenisla, to that worthy woman as the author of the "Fifty Years' Struggle of the Scottish Covenanters;" and great was her delight on the occasion. She eagerly declared that she had read the book over many times.

In perfect peace and rest did Mr. Dodds pass a precious fortnight in this delightful corner of the Grampians. His mind was in a quiet and contemplative mood, ready to entertain the exalted thoughts inspired by the natural grandeur around him, and to ascend to the higher region of spiritual ideas and aspirations. The place, the air, the friends near him, the simple pleasures, and the tranquil employments of the hour were all to his taste, and seemed expressly fitted to prepare him for that passage into the unseen world which to him was so nigh at hand. What secret communion he enjoyed meanwhile with his God and Saviour cannot be stated here with any certainty. But he habitually rested

on the great doctrines, and cherished the sublime hopes of the Christian religion. He had long before this won for himself, won by hard intellectual toil and many a spiritual struggle, an assured conviction that Jesus Christ is the Divine Son of God and the only Saviour of sinners.

Returning refreshed and invigorated to Dundee, he was able to visit a number of friends, to attend to some matters of business, and even to touch up several of the lectures that still occupied a portion of his leisure. In conferring with Mr. Thornton on some important professional matters which gave that gentleman not a little anxiety at the time, he showed a clearness of judgment and a vigour of intellect never surpassed in his best days. He was also led to think that his ailment had taken a favourable turn which might end in his restoration to a fair measure of health. On the evening of Friday, the 11th of September, he applied his wife's hand to the region of his heart, and said, "Do you feel how much stronger it beats? I think if I am spared to get over this, I will make an old man yet." On the afternoon of the next day, Mrs. Dodds left for Edinburgh, on the understanding that her husband, now so much recruited, would join her early in the following week.

Almost immediately after his wife's departure, he walked out of town in the direction of Lochee, for the purpose of calling on the Rev. Archibald B. Connell, the United Presbyterian minister of that place, whose acquaintance he wished to make, and to whom he had received a letter of introduction. But when, after his solitary walk, he had almost reached the door of Mr. Connell's house, he was seen suddenly to fall down, and was immediately taken up in a state of unconsciousness. He expired before he could be carried into the house he had expected to enter. Mr.

Connell and he had been quite unknown to each other, and had never consciously met in this world. Even after the unknown stranger had lain dead for hours in Mr. Connell's house, that gentleman did not know his name. A more pathetic, a more tragic visit was never paid by one poor mortal to another in this world. "Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets."

Dr. Lennox and Dr. Pirie, of Dundee, having pronounced the cause of death to be apoplexy resulting from heart disease, the body was conveyed to the house of Mr. Thornton, where it lay till it was committed to the grave. Mrs. Dodds received the terrible news in Edinburgh by telegraph, when in a lonely lodging ; her daughter, Mrs. Deschamps, and her husband, both of whom she had expected to meet, having not arrived from London. She left early next morning for Dundee, which she reached in the forenoon when the church bells were ringing. All the members of her family at that time in this country soon followed, to share, and, if possible, to lighten her overwhelming sorrow. The widow and her children found the features of the departed not darkened and disfigured, but only subdued and chastened by the hand of death. His eldest daughter, Mrs. Bontor, thus describes what met the eye in the chamber where the body was laid : "The grand repose of my father's face in death we shall never forget. The seal of everlasting life seemed set on his brow. His face was so noble and beautiful that our quietest, happiest hours during that awful time were spent in the room where he lay. He was to the end, and even in death, as he had always been in life, the head and stay of his wife and children."

The funeral took place on Wednesday, the 16th Septem-

ber, and was attended by a number of the most distinguished citizens of Dundee, many of whom had long been connected with the deceased by the ties of friendship.

The interment took place in the Eastern Necropolis, a cemetery which Mr. Dodds had often admired when in life. It was noticed that the funeral procession passed close to the "Morgan Hospital," that noble institution which, but for the singular energy and skill of the deceased, might never have enriched the charities of Dundee.

A suitable monument was in due time erected over the grave by Mr. Dodds' family. With the name of the departed and the dates of his birth and death, there are inscribed upon it his favourite word, *PATIENTIA*; and the following brief, but expressive sentences:—"One who loved his fellow-man." "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come." "He shall enter into peace."

Little more need be said about the life and character of the subject of this Memoir. The narrative now given will be considered sufficient to show what kind of man Mr. Dodds was, what he actually did, and what in more favourable circumstances he might have done. That his individuality was very pronounced, and that he possessed not only high mental powers but many of the qualities of genius, will probably be admitted by all who peruse these pages; while those who intimately knew him will certainly acknowledge the literal truth of all that has here been said of his extraordinary faculties. It is true that the high aspirations of his youth were never realised, that he never was permitted to enter that forensic arena where most probably he would have won the greatest triumphs; but he displayed

in one important department of the legal profession all the powers that go to form a first-rate lawyer. His legal acumen and professional knowledge were of a very high order; and in all his dealings with his clients he uniformly acted like a man of incorruptible integrity. He was one who consulted less his own interests than the interests of others, and was infinitely more ready to wrong himself than any body else. He was also capable of prodigious industry and application when important matters of business demanded his attention; and the signal professional triumphs he gained were due as much to his moral energy as to his legal erudition.

Many of his friends always regretted that his splendid powers never found a worthy field for their exercise. When he spoke at a public dinner, on a political platform, or in a popular assembly, he carried all before him by his commanding eloquence. His oratory was certainly coloured with the hues of poetry, and was often instinct with sentiment and passion; but it usually contained a sound body of argument, and was uniformly directed to the noblest ends. He was a philosophic thinker, as well as a poet and orator; and although a man of advanced views on many important subjects, he generally stated them with wisdom and moderation. Those who knew him best believed that he was fitted to make a great figure in the House of Commons had he found the requisite opportunity; but, perhaps fortunately for himself, he was finally content to remain in a comparatively humble walk of life, remote from the struggles and disappointments of political ambition. He found special delight in literary work; but while he wrote powerful and spirited prose, he poured out his soul most fully in his poetry. Most of his poems indicate the hand of a true master of the

lyre ; but his “Lays of the Covenanters,” which form the most precious portion of his volume, betray the true fire of genius. These burning tributes to the immortal religious heroes of Scotland were greatly admired by many competent judges when they first appeared more than thirty years ago. They are now presented to the public in the hope that their merits will be generously recognised by many readers who have hitherto been ignorant of their existence.

BATTLE-SONG OF THE PENTLANDS.

THIS day must set in blood!
Each true man to his post!
Strike for Christ's Crown and Covenant,
And God be with His host!

Though few and faint we be,
And the tempests wildly blow,
Yet here, upon this naked heath,
We fearless dare the foe.
Long hath the tyrant raged,
And the people have been dumb:
Sword of the Lord! avenge the past,
And free the time to come!

Not for the fading leaf
That decks the conqueror's head,
Nor sinful thirst for blood or gold,
Our feet have hither led;
We combat for our rights,
For our heritage Divine.

O Lord! look down from heaven in love,
A visit this Thy vine.

Our homes in blackness lie,
And our pleasant fields are waste.
And our fathers and our brethren
Like beasts of prey are chased.
Our priests are driven forth,
And our temples are defiled;
And the house of God must now be sought
Far in the desert wild.

And now that, front to front,
We have met the tyrant's horde,
Woe be to him that slacks his arm
Or turns away his sword!
Better to fall in fight
For the charter of our land,
Than pine in bondage and in fear,
A crouching, hunted band.

And if we fall, this hill
Like Lebanon shall grow,
And other times in gladness reap
What we in trouble sow.
And where our ashes rest,
Beneath the heather sod,
The youth of Scotland shall renew
Their Covenant with God.

This day must set in blood!
Each true man to his post!

Strike for Christ's Crown and Covenant,
And God be with His host!

DIRGE OVER THE SLAIN.

Who were interred in Rullion Green the day after the Battle.

ALLELUJAH! praise the Lord!
Be his holy name adored!
They who suffer for His Word
Shall walk with Him in glory.

“Earth to earth, and dust to dust!”
Earth! to thee we now intrust
The slaughtered bodies of the just,
 A sacred treasure given!
Here, upon the mountain side,
They boldly stemmed the tyrant's pride,
Heroes fought and martyrs died
 For fatherland and heaven!

Where they fell shall be their grave,
Meetest burial for the brave;
Though the wintry tempests rave,
 Calm shall be their slumber!
Souls redeem'd from guilt and pain,
Ye who suffered also reign,
Joined to that immortal train
 Which no tongue can number!

Nor myrrh nor aloes have we here,
Mourning pomp, nor costly bier;
Rude must be their sepulchre
 Rude the stone placed o'er them.

But safe each mangled corse shall lie:
The brightest watchers of the sky
Shall watch them, with unfailing eye,
Until their Lord restore them.

By the Nith and by the Ken,
By Clyde and Ayr, through hill and glen,
Where dwelt these gallant Westland men,
May mourning hearts find gladness!

Holy spirit! Comfort-giver!
Shall the sword destroy for ever?
Wilt Thou not this land deliver
From misery and madness?

Brothers! on Carnethy's head
Sinks the sunset, dusky red:
O'er the turf which wraps the dead,
A parting tear we offer.
Leave the martyrs to their rest,
Within the mountain's frozen breast!
An hour still comes for all oppress'd,
A crown for all who suffer.

ALLELUJAH! praise the Lord!
Be His holy name adored!
They who suffer for His Word
Shall walk with Him in glory!

THE DEATH OF JAMES GUTHRIE.

[THIS distinguished martyr was the son of the Laird of Guthrie, the representative of an ancient Forfarshire family. Educated for the ministry, James Guthrie, as soon as he was ordained, took a very high place among his brethren as a preacher of the Gospel, and a zealous defender of the Church of Scotland. He was a man of high talents, and spotless character, no less eminent for his candour and prudence than for his burning zeal in the service of his Divine Master. He was appointed minister of Lauder in 1638, and was translated to Stirling in 1649. He took a leading part in the councils of the Covenanters. Soon after the Restoration of Charles II., in 1660, he was marked out for vengeance by the Court party. He was accordingly tried and condemned for high treason at Edinburgh. He received his sentence with perfect equanimity, and was executed on the 1st June, 1661. His death, like that of Argyle, had all the features of a judicial murder. As he was among the first, so certainly he was one of the noblest of the Scottish Covenanting martyrs.]

SLOWLY, slowly tolls the death-note, at the Cross the scaffold
stands :

Freedom, law, and life are playthings where the Tyrant's voice
commands :

Found in blood your throne and temple! fortaste of a glorious
reign ;

Though the heavens were hung in sackcloth, let the Witnesses
be slain !

'Tis the merriest month of summer, 'tis the sweetest day in
June,

And the sun breathes joy in all things, riding at his highest
noon ;

Yet a silence, deep and boding, broods on all the city round,
And a fear is on the people, as an earthquake rocked the ground.

Slowly, slowly tolls the death-note, at the Cross the scaffold
stands ;

And the Guardsmen prance and circle, marshalled in their
savage bands ;

And the people swell and gather, heaving darkly like the deep,
When, in fitful gusts, the north winds o'er its troubled bosom
sweep.

Now the grim Tolbooth is opened, and the death-procession
forms,

With the tinsel pomps of office, with a vain parade of arms ;
Lowly in the midst, and leaning on his staff, in humble guise
Guthrie comes, the Proto-martyr! ready for the sacrifice ;
Guthrie comes, the Proto-martyr! and a stern and stifled groan
Runs through the multitude ; but patiently he passeth on ;

And the people stand uncovered, and they gaze with streaming eyes,
As when of old the fiery chariot rapt Elijah to the skies.

On his staff in meekness leaning, see him bend infirm and weak;
Man in youth, and old in manhood, pale and sunken is his cheek.

And adown his shoulders flowing, locks grown prematurely gray,

Yet the spirit, strong in weakness, feels no languor nor decay;
And a loftiness is on him, such as fits a noble mind.

Like the oak in grandeur rising, howsoever blows the wind;
On his lip, though blanch'd with vigils, sits the will to dare or die,

And the fires of grace and genius sparkle in his cloudless eye.

“This frail and mortal flesh, I give it
Freely to the Lord of all!
Were my limbs of brass and iron,
’T were an offering far too small,
Life is only ours to serve Him;
And our term of service done,
Death for Him and for His Covenant
Is an honour cheaply won.

“Not as felon, nor as traitor,
Whatso evil tongues proclaim,
Am I hither come to suffer
Every brand of outward shame.
Fixed and serious in my purpose
Where the hand of God was seen;

Yet in all things have I laboured
To preserve my garments clean.

“ I was loyal when the kingdom
Bowed to Cromwell’s haughty frown;
Few would own the royal standard
All defaced and trodden down.
Then the flatterers who doom me
To suffer in the street,
Whined and fawned like stricken spaniels
Round the Lord Protector’s feet!

“ Constant to my Prince, and constant
To the vows we both had taken,
Faithful to his right I stood, when
By his summer friends forsaken.
Loyal am I, free to render
Unto Caesar Caesar’s due,
Tribute, custom, temporal honour,
And obedience leal and true.

But the King who reigns in Zion,
High o’er every earthly throne,
Shall I flinch from His allegiance?
Or my solemn vows disown?
With uplifted hands I swore it,
When the Nation joined in band.
Monarch, magistrates, and nobles,
And the peasants of the land!
Though I knew by signs and shadows
That my life-blood must be spent

In the work and in the warfare,
Struggling for the Covenant.

“Welcome scaffold! ’tis a Bethel,
Angel-wings are hovering here;
Welcome ladder! thou shalt lift me
Far beyond this cloudy sphere.
Ah! thou Daughter of my people!
Sweet and lovely at thy birth,
When the throes of Reformation
Shook the old astonished earth,
What a blight is on thy beauty,
Since thou hast forgot thy truth,
And the joys of thy bright morning,
The sweet espousals of thy youth!

“Thou shalt suffer! God’s true Gospel
Shall be darkened, and a brood
Of locusts overspread thy valleys,
Leaving neither flower nor food;
And the wild-boar from the forest
Rush on thy defenceless home;
For thy watchmen do not warn thee
Of the woes about to come;
But they slumber, drugged with wine-lees,
Or they quail in carnal fear;
And thy bondage shall continue
Till the Lord Himself appear,
Till He make His right arm naked,
To avenge His people’s wrongs!
And restore the mournful captives,
With everlasting songs.

“ Here my pilgrim’s staff is broken,
All my bands are now untied;
I die to live with Him for ever,
Who for my salvation died.
Faith, which long hath groped and wavered
In this world’s uncertain light,
Leaping from its mortal prison,
Now is passing into sight.
Earthly cares and human contests,
Inward pangs and darkness cease,
Now, O Lord! dismiss Thy servant
Into everlasting peace!”

He hath spoken! Seal his sentence; little boots it what ye do:
He hath spoken! and recorded darker, heavier doom on you! .

Hurry on the doom assigned him by the minions of your State,
Rend the head from off his body, fix it on your city-gate;
Let the Lyon-Herald taint him, be his arm reversed and torn;
Be his earthly goods confiscate, let his household wail and
mourn;

Crush the Spiritual by the Carnal, answer Conscience with the
sword;

By the dungeon and the scaffold force submission to your word:
Good and Evil, Force and Freedom, let them close with dead-
ly yell!

’Tis a warfare old as Satan, deep as the abyss of Hell!

He hath spoken! and his words are not water on the ground;
Years may vanish, but his warnings shall in all their truth be
found.

He hath spoken! and the Nation to its inmost soul hath heard

And the withered bones are shaken by the breathings of his
word;

And, though dead, his guiding spirit in the land for aye shall
dwell,

And Oppression's boasted strongholds shiver at the mighty
spell.

**CARGILL TAKEN PRISONER AT COVINGTON MILL,
ON THE CLYDE.**

JULY, 1681.

[DONALD CARGILL, born about the year 1610, in the parish of Rattray, Perthshire, was one of the ministers of Glasgow at the period of the Restoration ; but stoutly resisting the introduction of Prelacy, and maintaining the rights of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, he was deprived of his office by the Government. He became, in consequence, a field-preacher and a leading spirit among the persecuted Covenanters. He had certainly the courage of his opinions, for after preaching to a large congregation at Torwood, a place between Stirling and Falkirk, he openly pronounced sentence of excommunication against the King and the Duke of York, the Dukes of Monmouth, Lauderdale, and Rothes, Sir George Mackenzie, and Sir Thomas Dalziel of Binns. This act of defiance specially incensed the Government, and every effort was made by it to apprehend the undaunted Presbyterian minister. Its vengeance was at length gratified by the apprehension of Cargill near

Lanark, through the activity of Irving, the laird of Bonshaw, Dumfriesshire, who commanded a troop of horse in the Royal service. Cargill was immediately condemned in Edinburgh, and was executed the day after his condemnation. Though he went such lengths in resisting a tyrannical government, this martyr is described by his contemporaries as a man of singular devoutness and exemplary life, not naturally of a bold and imperious, but rather a mild and amiable temper.]

I.

THE Clyde rolls on majestic, beneath a July moon;
The sky is calm and cloudless, well-nigh as bright as noon;
And far into the heavens Cothwhan uplifts his height,
With his young and floating tresses all bathed in streams of
light,
Like some angelic watcher, to watch with radiant eye
O'er holy Cargill's slumber in the miller's cot hard by.

II.

The blessing rest upon thee, and deep, serene repose!
And the cloudy pillar hide thee from the fury of thy foes!
With strong heart hast thou wrestled in the fullness of the
day,
And thy God shall be thy glory when the earth-lights die away.
Whoso are true and faithful unto their latest breath,
Bud when the false ones wither, and greenest look in death.

III.

But see those forms that darkly from the distant heights appear;
That hollow sound, whence comes it, like horesemen trampling
near?

'Tis but the dark wood waving where St. John's kirk standeth
lone,
And that hollow tramp of horsemen is but the night-wind's
moan.
And all is peace and sweetness; the moon looks from on high
On her cradled children smiling with her blessed mother-eye.

IV.

Ah no! 'tis not the dark wood, 'tis not the night wind's moan;
'Tis the savage troop of Bonshaw that are hither rushing on.
The door is burst, the chamber is filled with steel-shod feet,
And the aged slumberer shaken from his slumbers still and
sweet.
He looks at first half-wildered, then meekly riseth up,
And with cheerful heart prepareth to drink his Master's cup.

V.

Across the Clyde they bear him, and to Lanark roughly ride,
While beneath the horse's belly his legs are closely tied.
And loud the jeers and laughter, and Bonshaw yells with glee,
"A blessed day for Bonshaw, a blessed prize to me,
Six thousand merks are clinking on that blessed saddle-tree!"

VI.

By the ancient kirk at Lanark, in the eye of all the hills,
Then spake God's ancient servant, and time the word fulfils:
"I tell thee, cruel Bonshaw, that on high hast built thy nest,
By whom God's Church and people so long have been oppress,
Where now thou stand'st exulting in the greatness of thy lust,
A bloody hand from thine own wild band shall strike thee to
the dust,

As low as thou art lordly shalt thou welter in thy blood,
And this shall be ere yon ash tree again begin to bud."

VIII.

And so before that ash tree again began to bud,
As low as he was lordly did he welter in his blood.
A bloody hand from his own wild band did strike him to the
dust,
Where then he stood exulting in the greatness of his lust.
By the ancient kirk at Lanark was the mangled carcase laid,
And the word returned not empty which the godly man had
said.

VIII.

But gently, like the streamlet that seeks the ocean's breast,
Old Cargill passeth onward to his centre and his rest.
Even as an aged pilgrim, who sadly toils along,
Enters the city gladly at the quiet even song.

IX.

The wise and wakeful virgins, whose lamps were trimmed and
bright,
Went forth to meet the bridegroom at the midwatch of the
night,
And dreaded not the darkness, their lamps so clearly burned,
But forth they went rejoicing, and with bridal wreaths re-
turned.

THE DOVE AND THE RUIN.

[IN an excursion in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, the writer had occasion to pass an old ruined tower, which, in former days, was the seat of one who gained unenviable distinction as a ready and unscrupulous tool in the persecution of the Scottish Covenanters. On entering the doorway to examine the ruin, a dove was observed nestling near the roof. The place, and the well known emblematic character of this favorite of the groves, suggested the poem. The tower mentioned is understood to be the tower of Binns, in Linlithgowshire, once the residence of General Dalziel, a man of such evil repute in the days of the great persecution.]

Traveller.

O DOVE! that charimest the stream and grove, is this fit haunt
for thee?

The walls are blackening into dust, the chambers foul to see:
No cowslip peeps beneath the bush, no lark salutes the morn;
Spring quickens not the plane tree's leaf, nor swells the budding thorn.

Oh, hie thee to the Almond banks, where beeches stately grow ;
For there thy wing may sweetly rest, thy murmurs sweetly
flow.

This spot is waste and desolate, and leaf and blade are sere ;
Then why, O tender, warbling dove ! why art thou resting
here ?

Dove.

Slight no spot in this beautiful earth,
Crumbling tower, or desert wild ;
For Nature, which hath given them birth,
Bestows fit dower on every child.
Love makes lovely all she looks on,
And flow'rets spring where she glides along ;
Ruins smile and deserts blossom,
And branchless thickets fill with song.
From confusion order wakes,
After midnight morning breaks :
This spot is drear, the leaves all sere.
Yet I, the Bird of Love, am here.

Traveller.

The curse of rapine stamps decay on buttress, arch and wall.
The earth around is barrenness whereon no dews may fall ;
The spoiler of the saints is spoiled, his heritage laid bare,
And all is blackness now where he, the bloodhound, had his
lair.

The blight may fail to strip the flower, the lightning lose its
ain',
But vengeance from the Lord shall blast the persecutor's name.
This spot is waste and desolate, and leaf and blade are sere ;
Then why, O gentle-hearted dove ! why art thou resting here ?

Dove.

When for the Crown and the Covenant
Scotland's faithful remnant stood,
And Antichrist did hotly pant
To glut his maw in the elect's blood,
O'er the moorland tracked by foemen,
In torturing cell, on gallows tree,
Peace hung o'er them, heaven before them.
And death but gave them victory.
When the bloodhound held this den,
Weakest things had strengthening then!
This spot is drear, the leaves all sere,
Yet I, the Bird of Peace, am here!

Traveller.

But what avails heroic strife? the crown of glory won?
The father's creed is ridiculed by his degenerate son;
The burning martyr-words of faith are laughed at with disdain.
He sealed the covenant with his blood, his blood is shed in vain.
To endless struggles, baffled hopes, our weary lot is fixed;
The victory that one age proclaims is still undone the next:
And prostrate in inglorious dust our aspirations lie:
'Tis better that we eat and drink, to-morrow we must die!

Dove.

If thou hadst faith like a mustard-seed,
Couldst thou tremble thus aghast?
The clouds may shift, but the sun shines through,
And tempests rage, but the earth stands fast.
Symbols wane, the truths rekindle
With fuel fresh and wider spread:

Old oppressions stir; but valour,
By ages stronger, strikes them dead,
Forward, forward rolls the war!
Triumphs beckon from afar!
This spot is drear, the leaves all sere,
Yet I, the Bird of Faith, am here.

THE AGED COVENANTER.

HIS DEATH ON HEARING OF THE DEFEAT AT THE PENTLANDS.

[AMONGST the four hundred Presbyterian ministers who, about the year 1663, gave up or were ejected from their livings, on account of their refusal to conform to Episcopacy, was Arthur Murray, an aged minister of Orkney. "This good and aged man," says Wodrow, "was living in the suburbs of Edinburgh, through [which Dalziel's soldiers marched in triumph, on their return from the battle of the Pentlands. When he opened his window, and saw them display their banners, and heard the shouts of the soldiers, triumphing over the prisoners, he was struck to the very heart, took to his bed immediately, and died in a day or two."]

O LORD! remember in Thy love Thy persecuted flock,
Who flee for refuge from the wolf to mountain and to rock!
And if, to right their cruel wrongs, the sword they nobly draw,
Oh! may it flash like cherubim's, in brightness and in awe!

Our lily flowers of Presbytery by swinish hoofs are soiled;
 Our ancient Scottish liberties by lawless hands despoiled;
 The peaceful hearths at which we sat, our children on our knee.
 Are ringing now with the tramp and curse of a heathen soldiery,

“ Hey for the boots and the thumbikins,
 But and the gallows tree!
 And hang the Whigamore loons
 Where Whigamore loons should be!
 Round by the edge of the Pentlands,
 Up on the Rullion Green,
 I trow we spilled their sour milk,
 And tapp’d their Covenant spleen.”

What shoutings, fiercer than the blast? These shouts! I
 know them well!
 ’Tis the fiendish rout and revelry of the troopers of Dalziel!
 His ruthless nature only knows to ravage and to slay,
 And many a godly family are fatherless this day.
 In all the glens of Galloway a wailing voice is heard,
 And sore afflicted Annandale mourns like a mateless bird;
 And Rachel for her children weeps. whilst Herod quaffs his
 wine,
 Yet ever turns a ghastly eye to Bethlehem’s awful sign!

The foxes have their hiding-ptace, and burrow safely there,
 The partridge finds some leafy nook, free from the fowler’s
 snare;
 But shade or shelter none is found our poor oppressed to save,
 Hamlet or city, house or field, mountain or forest-cave.
 Where faithful pastors fed their flocks, false curates give them
 straw.

And gobble up all carnal things with foul insatiate maw:
 A sav'ry feast for the Romish Beast black Prelacy prepares,
 The jackal only tracks the prey which the huge old lion tears.

“There's a pack for the Haddo's Hole,
 There's a pack for the Old Tolbooth;
 And we'll blind the eyes of Presbytery,
 And grind her snarling tooth.
 Hey for the boots and the thumbikins,
 But and the gallows-tree!
 And hang the Whigamore loons,
 Then harry the West Countrie!”

Oh! bear me to my bed in haste, my heart hath burst in twain,
 When green and goodly oaks are rent, shall withered stocks
 remain?

As Eli fell, when Aphek's field beheld the ark depart,
 So Scotland's broken Covenant hath broke my trembling heart
 I thought to sleep amid mine own, by Scalpa's rushing wave;
 But now my aged bones have found the Greyfriars for a grave.
 And where, in nobler monument, could my poor dust be stored,
 Than there where Scotland's martyr-host are waiting for their
 Lord?

“Huzza for the crown and the mitre!
 We'll pledge them in merry brown ale:
 ‘Life's but a span and a soldier's a man’
 Then drink till our pockets fail!
 And Old Tom will find us in booty,
 With fines from the West Countrie churls,
 Who'd cock up their greasy blue bonnets
 Above all our dukes and earls.”

A bloody sword gleams far and wide, and the priests of Baal
shall tread

In rage upon God's heritage, and righteous blood be shed :
But, hark! the mighty angel's voice proclaims from sea to
shore,

That Babylon is fallen, is fallen, is fallen to rise no more!
From gifted Wishart's bed of fire to gracious Guthrie's death,
The righteous blood shall be required, in wonders and in
wrath :

The dainty surplice shall not screen, and the Council shall
sink dumb,

And the sceptre quiver like a reed, when the days of vengeance
come.

Some precious ties encircle me, some mem'ries of the past,
An old man's heart, though dimmed, hath gleams the bright-
est at the last,

My little homestead, and the kirk, and Orkney's sea-voice
stern!

But cease, my passing soul! why thus with earthly visions
yearn?

Yet must we part, spouse of my heart, mirror of love and truth,
The solace of my life's decline, companion of my youth?

How sweet hath been our fellowship through long, long,
changeeful years!

We meet in heaven, where death is not, nor warfare, change,
or tears!

Now earth, and time, and creature-thoughts are fading from
mine eye.

O man! thou art alone with God, prepare thyself to die :
The faintest and the feeblest of the followers of the Lamb,

'Tis by the sovereign grace of God I am now what I am!
The veil is parting, flesh is failing, light or path is none!
God of the feeble, guide of the feeblest! Glory! peace! 'tis
won!

“Into Thine hands I do commit my spirit; for Thou art He,
O Thou Jehovah, God of truth, that hast redeemed me!”

THE BATTLE OF AIRSMOSS.

FOUGHT IN JULY, 1680.

'Tis morn, the broad red sun
Gleams through his misty covering;
The plover and the wild curlew
On fitful wing are hovering.
The wearied ones have laid them down,
If but a moment they may rest;
Earth! they shall soon be all thine own,
Then take them gently to thy breast! .

Scarce have their eyelids closed
When the watcher's warning cry is heard,
And each with a sudden bound
Starts from sleep, and grasps his sword.
Along the dark, outstretching heath,
Sullen and fierce the troopers come.
With helmets' glare, with cries of rage,
With loud harsh clang of trump and drum.

One moment, stern and still,
The martyrs view them gathering nigh;
One moment, with an earnest look,
Each on his brother turns his eye.
But Danger's hour is Freedom's birth,
No fear or craven look is there;
All circle round the man of God,
Who calmly pours their latest prayer.

CAMERON'S LAST PRAYER,

Shepherd that didst Joseph lead!
Helper in the hour of need!
Treader in the winepress! we
Lift our waiting eyes to Thee!
On rush the foeman like a flood,
And the desert gapes for blood.
Lord! spare the green, the ripest take!
Hear us for Thine own name's sake!

Here stand we, on the last retreat
That earth will yield our weary feet;
From rocky cave to mountain chas'd,
From mountain to the desert waste;
From the waste to heaven we soar,
Sinless, painless evermore.
Lord! spare the green, the ripest take!
Hear us for Thine own name's sake!

With a longing strong and deep,
With a bridegroom's joy we leap;
We have panted for this hour,
To grasp the tyrant in his power;

And write in blood our legacy
To nations struggling to be free.
Lord! spare the green, the ripest take
Hear us for Thine own name's sake!

Through the floods be Thou our guide,
In the flames be at our side;
Purge us from our drossy clay,
Wash our mortal stains away :
Christ our King hath pass'd before;
Bloody sea, but blessed shore!
Bearer of the eternal keys,
Bear us through our agonies!

How long, O Lord! shall Zion lie
A scorn to all the passers-by?
Shall godless heart and gory hand
For ever scourge Thine ancient land?
Awake, arm of the Lord! 'tis time,
The earth is drunk with blood and crime,
And crush the thrones that will not fear Thee!
Smite the lands that will not hear Thee!

Now for the onset! Brothers, kneel!
Lord, give us faith and holy zeal;
Loose the ties that gently bind us,
Heal the hearts we leave behind us;
May we die as die the brave,
And freedom yet spring from our grave!
Treader in the winepress! we
Rise to be evermore with Thee!

By the black and weltering swamp,
A small green mound uplifts its brow,
'Twas the altar whence their incense rose:
'Tis their camp and battle-fortress now!
The startled hare hath fled the brake,
No lark remains to greet the morn;
The raven only flaps his wing,
And whets his beak on the gnarled thorn.

“Down with the cut-eared dogs!”
The troopers gnash their teeth and cry:
“God is our refuge and our strength!”
Is the brief and sternly-breathed reply.
With hunger, toil, oppression worn,
Their numbers few, their weapons rude,
In firm and close array they stand
Against that ravening multitude.

The blades like lightning flash,
And volleyed thunders rend the sky;
The war-steeds paw the heathery sod.
Aloft the glittering pennons fly.
But, as from Ailsa's sea-beat cliff,
The howling surge is backward toss'd;
Even so these fierce battalions reel,
Stemmed by that firm, devoted host.

Though few and scant equipped,
Right forth they burst with one loud cheer,
And many an empty saddle tells
The fate of many a cavalier.

Before that storm of peasant strength,
Dark sweeping as the northern blast,
White plume and glittering pennon whirl,
In one wild wreck and ruin cast.

High on his gallant roan,
From rank to rank Rathillet flies;
Where he rushes terror spreads,
Where he strikes a foeman dies.
But what avails the lion's might
When crowding hunters round him close?
Pierced from behind, Rathillet falls,
Amid the yell of deadly foes.

“Shame on the coward arm!”
Young Chryston cries, and, like a dart,
Flies to avenge Rathillet's fall;
An eagle, young and strong of heart,
Whose nest is on the Calder banks;
On fierce and fiery wing he rushes,
And in one glorious hero-burst,
Forth from its fount his young heart gushes.

And Cameron, soul of fire!
What quenches others quickens thee!
In the tumult still his voice is heard,
“For Scotland's faith and liberty!”
Priest of the outcast! down he sinks,
The shepherd 'mid his slaughtered flock.
Brave one! thy Master calls thee home,
Then soar through blood and battle-smoke?

Long rolls the unequal strife.

And men and horse like foam are driven;
And shouts and shrieks, curses and prayers,
Ring wide through all the vault of heaven.
At length, in threefold numbers ranged,
On press the foe with rage and pride,
Till one by one the martyr-band
Drop by their faithful pastor's side.

Like reapers dropping down,
Their sheaves around them thickly strewn;
So drop the soldiers of the Cross,
By numbers crushed, and toil alone.
Silence again is on the heath,
The war-steed's neigh comes faint and far.
Ye chosen ones, to glory rise!
The harp, the crown, the morning star!

By the black and weltering swamp,
A small green mound uplifts its brow;
'Twas their altar, 'twas their battle-ground,
'Tis their martyr-spot and death-bed now!
There, shrouded in their own heart's blood,
Their bodies rest upon the field,
Till pious hands shall make their tomb,
And lay them where their truth was sealed.

For their rights and faith they fell!
They fell that these might ever stand.
Men of a race that shall ne'er forget
What they owe to that dauntless martyr-band.

Then rear for them no sculptur'd pile,
Set a rough grey stone on the lonely heath!
Not a hind or child in Scotland all
But can tell right well *who* lie beneath!

THE MARTYR OF PRIESTHILL.

[JOHN BROWN, the Christian carrier of Priesthill, in the parish of Muirkirk, Ayrshire, deservedly occupies a high place in the martyr-roll of Scottish Covenanters. He was shot by Claverhouse at his own door, in presence of his wife and children. The hardened troopers were so melted by Brown's prayer, offered up in the expectation of immediate death, that they refused to fire upon him at the word of command, whereupon their commander himself shot his victim through the head with his own hand. The interview between Brown and his wife before they were parted by death, and the conduct of the poor woman in composing and weeping over her husband's mangled remains, are among the most pathetic things in all history. The character of Brown, both in life and at death, shone forth with the highest lustre; while the act of Claverhouse, in killing him so brutally, is universally execrated.]

For a fine half-tone picture of the monument to the memory of John Brown, reproduced from a photograph taken on the spot, see the plate on the opposite page of this volume.

Many years ago a flat stone was placed over this martyr's grave with an inscription around the margin, beginning at the upper left hand corner, running across the top, down the right side, across the bottom, and up the left side of the stone to the place of beginning, and there continuing for six lines more across the top. This inscription reads as follows :

Here lies the body of John Brown Martyr who was murdered in this place by GRAHAM of Claverhouse for his testimony to the Covenanted work of Reformation Because he durst not own the authority of the then Tyrant destroying the same. Who died the first day of May A D 1685 and of his age 58.

Running lengthwise of the rest of the stone, within the border formed by the first part of the former inscription, are the following lines, forming an acrostic :

I n deaths cold bed the dusty part here lies
O f one who did the earth as dust despise
H ere in this place from earth he took departure
N ow he has got the garland of the martyr

B utchered by Claverse and his bloody band
R aging most ravenously over all the land
O nly for owning Christ's Supremacy
W ickedly wronged by encroaching Tyranny
N othing how near soever he to good
E steemed, nor dear for any truth his blood.

On the side of the new pillar facing the north-west is the following inscription :

THIS MONUMENT
 WAS
ERECTED
 AND THE ADJOINING GRAVE
 of
 JOHN BROWN
 INCLOSED
 by money collected .
 at
 A SERMON
 preached here by the
 REV. JOHN MILWAINE
 on
 Aug. 28th, 1825
 in
 COMMEMORATION
of
 THE
MARTYRS.

On the other side are the names of those who provided the monument and superintended its erection. And on a small stone on the north-west side of the inclosure wall is the passage of Scripture :

“Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.”—1 Sam. 2: 50.

This small stone in the inclosure wall is clearly shown in the picture already referred to, which gives a vivid conception of the wild moorland, and the retired and gloomy glen where the monument stands—“a fitting scene,” says James Gibson, in his “Tombstones of the Covenanters,” for the dark tragedy enacted by Claverhouse, as a more lonely and desolate spot can scarcely be conceived.”]

Time—The First Morning of May, 1685.

SCENE I.—Interior of the Cottage of Priesthill; Early dawn; John Brown and his family engaged in their morning devotions; His family, consisting of his wife, by a second marriage, whose maiden name was Isabella Weir; his daughter Janet, about ten years of age, by his first marriage; and an infant boy by the second.

They sing part of Psalm xxvii.

“Against me though an host encamp,
My heart yet fearless is:
Though war against me rise, I will
Be confident in this.

One thing I of the Lord desired,
And will seek to obtain,
That all days of my life I may
Within God’s House remain;

That I the beauty of the Lord
Behold may and admire,
And that I in his holy place
May reverently inquire.”

He then reads in the gospel of John, chapter xvi., in which the following passages occur:

“These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

“It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for the joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

After offering up a solemn and memorable prayer, he rises, blesses his family, and goes out with his implements of labour.

SCENE II.—The Heights to the west of Lesmahagow: Claverhouse, at the head of three troops of dragoons, and attended by Cannon, the spy, who has undertaken to betray Brown.

CLAVERHOUSE. Another vile, misty morning. May-day, too! May-day in Ayrshire! Certainly this Ayrshire is a great breeder of Whigs and mists, very suitable companions. (*Turning to the Spy*). We shall catch the weasel, though?

CANNON. No doubt of it, sir. His wife who takes me for one of the brotherhood, told me he was to steal home this morning from his hiding in the moors. But, may I beseech you, sir, spare his life! If he were not crazed by conventicles, he is a good, innocent man, that would not do an act of wrong or violence to gain the whole world. In one way and another, he has been friend to almost every body from Clyde to Ayr's mouth. When my own wife and children were lying ill in one bed——

CLAVERHOUSE. Peace, chattering booby! I have let you talk so far, because I like to know what edge my tools have got. Hark ye, sirrah! I keep two pistols in my belt, one for Whig vermin, the other for such ill-dipt rascals as you. Beware! Soldiers! see that you are charged. We're in the Ayrshire moors, and belike may start a covey of psalm-singers in some of the hollows.

SCENE III.—The high moor ground overtopping Priesthill; Cairntable Hill rising straight opposite; Brown occupied in casting turf for fuel, but often stopping from working, and looking around him, and upwards, in an earnest and medi-

In a glen in the same moorland, but at some little distance, and unseen, a number of the young men and women of the surrounding hamlets are supposed to have met together, to hold the old revels of "May Morning."

BROWN. Again the earth, waked from her wintry trance,
Starts up with looks of promise and of joy.
All nature is alive, all life is fresh
With youthful brightness and a new-felt power.
Copy, tho' faint, not utterly defaced,
Of that first glorious birth and spring of being,
When on the shapeless mass the Spirit of God
Moved, and brought forth a world all good, all fair.

Down from the mountains gently come the winds.
The plains beneath open their breasts to meet them:
The mist, which erewhile hung upon the morn,
Veiling its extreme loveliness, disparts;
And bird and beast to one great song of praise
Are all attuned.

'Tis the First Morn of May!

(A pause.)

And there thou look'st abroad, Cairntable! watching
As with a hunter's eye the growing light;
While the Sun paws the orient clouds, impatient
To run his mighty race. Into thy bosom,
Swelling with vernal impulse, dost thou draw
The fatness and rich influence of the morn,
For nourishment of all thy founts and streams,
And all thy herds, and manifold sweet creatures
To whom thou art a nurse, yea, and a mother.
And yonder (dearest, loveliest sight of all!),
Deep in the hollow of the valley, like

The lark's nest in the wilderness, peeps forth
Mine own beloved home! lightly the smoke
Curls on the morning breeze, where Isabel,
God's richest earthly gift to me, attends
Her household and her household duties, with
A care no less than Martha's, yet is not
Like her world-cumber'd, but the better part,
Like holier Mary, hath she wisely chosen.
Methinks I see my little Janet skipping
About the door, blithest of children she !
Yet never thoughtless in her merriment,
Prudent already as a housewife, and
A help and meet companion to her mother.

(A pause.)

O wife ! O children ! can I give you up ?
Most precious are ye to me ; never man
Yearned with more fondness o'er his home of love.
Myself of silent spirit, in them I found
A centre, and perpetual stored-up fountain
For all the gushing fulness of my heart.
Too much of idols have they been, too much
Have come between me and the Sovereign Lord.
Yet merciful as sovereign, blessed Saviour !
Forgive this frailty, subjugate this passion,
And make mine earth-affections stoop in awe,
And, even as bondmaids, to their heavenly mistress
In deep and all-resigning homage bow.
And verily the hour of trial comes !
The blast already ruffles in the branches !
I hear its fatal singing.

Tho' 'tis May-day,
And bud and sap around me, yet I know
That not with me 'tis May-day.

'Tis at hand,
The withering tempest that will strip my home,
Not the abode as now of simple joys,
But house of death and mourning ! I am warned
By the times and seasons. In the cave and dungeon,
On scaffold and on highway and lone moor,
And hard-fought battle-field, one after one
My brethren perish. I am also warned
By inward tokens and foreshadowings,
By presages and burdens from without.
But yesternorn, when Peden left the dwelling,
(Whose sore, wayfaring feet turned for a night
To seek short respite underneath our roof),
Thrice did he press poor Isabel's hand and groaned,
His eyes with sorrow more than age, bedimmed,
"Alas, poor thing ! a dark, a misty morning !"
'Tis seldom now he speaks. His heart is dumb
Beneath the visitation of the Lord.
In desert paths he wanders, and all night
Derns in the clifty rock, sleepless, and wrestling
For the remnant of the people !

Yes ! I know
Mine end is near : we must be hunted down.
And now, Lord ! I am ready to be offered :
My times are in Thine hand, so is my strength ;
Though suffering make me perfect !

Sweet the ties
That bind me to the earth ; but greater still

The voice that calls me on!

(Noise as of shouting and singing heard at a distance.)

What strange and startling noise is this which breaks
Upon the desert solitude!

(Noise continues, and voices heard singing confusedly.)

MAY-SONG.

Round the thorn on the sweet May-morn,
Dance it merrily, dance it merrily!

Alas!

Now I remember; 'tis an heathenish custom
Amongst the village youth to celebrate
The first May-morning with wild dance and song;
Dark relic of old Pagan revelries.
For many bygone years, whilst in this land
Flourished a pure and gospel ministry,
This baneful weed was all but rooted out.
Since Antichrist again hath raised his horn,
These secret, poisonous seeds are springing up;
As blight or mildew in one night may rot
What a long fertile spring hath richly nourished.
And they that would enslave the human soul,
And turn to their base ends the powers of man,
Must first corrupt before they fetter.

Wise

And uncorrupted spirits brook no chain!

O sinful, woeful land! where half thy children
Cain-like destroy the other, or but mock
Their dying groans, and dance upon their graves:
Where God's poor flock are slaughtered all day long,

And no account is taken, save in heaven!
 But know, the axe is laid at thy vile root,
 And thou shalt be hewn down, with stroke on stroke.

(The voices become louder, and seem approaching nearer, singing in a rough and boisterous manner.)

MAY SONG—*continued.*

Round the thorn on the sweet May-morn,
 Dance it merrily, dance it merrily!
 They that mourn when buds are born,
 Will certainly die in December.

Maids and shepherds! fresh and young,
 Light to the heel and blythe of tongue,
 Ere lamb has leapt or lark has sung,
 Merrily keep the May-day!
 Who can tell what may hap to-morrow?
 Who would couple youth and sorrow?
 Then come and range the green woods thorough:
 Merrily keep the May-day!

Round the thorn on the sweet May-morn,
 Dance it merrily, dance it merrily!
 They that mourn when buds are born,
 Will certainly die in December.

The curate sits at the alehouse door,
 And benison gives to the wild uproar,
 Mess John was not so jolly of yore;
 Merrily keep the May-day!
 Troubles there be by land and sea,
 Things are not as they used to be:
 But—Youth and May!—ho, what care we?
 Merrily keep the May-day!

Round the thorn on the sweet May-morn,
 Dance it merrily, dance it merrily!
 They that mourn when buds are born,
 Will certainly die in December!"

(The voices suddenly stop; in a few minutes a shout is heard: "The troopers! the troopers!" and the

multitude rush down the slopes dispersedly. Claverhouse marches up with his troops, who surround Brown.)

SCENE IV.—Same part of the moor ; the troops surrounding Brown ; Claverhouse rides up to him.

CLAVERHOUSE. Your name is John Brown of Priesthill ?

BROWN. It is.

CLAVERHOUSE. Pray for the king.

BROWN. Prayer is like the gales of heaven, which come not at man's bidding, but when and how the Spirit of God determineth. I neither feel call of duty, nor inward motion, to pray for the man whom thou callest king.

CLAVERHOUSE. The *man* indeed ! manifest traitor that you are.

BROWN. I owe James Stuart no allegiance. Unto me the tyrant and antichristian cannot be king, although by force of circumstances he many have usurped the throne of the land wherein I dwell.

CLAVERHOUSE. Enough, brood of Satan ! What punishment were sufficient for such a villainous rebel ? You have sealed your own doom ; you shall die within a few minutes.

BROWN. So be it as to God seemeth meet ! But mark me : I am no rebel, even against the lawless and unchristian authorities of the time. I have had no light to join in active resistance as many have done. Besides mine own calling as a shepherd and tiller of the ground, a sense of duty hath led me only to teach, instruct, and admonish the young, and to minister such comforts as mine own experience enabled me to the sick and dying. Thus have I humbly sought to do my generation work in the Church and commonwealth. Beyond this circle have I never walked ; and

though willing and rejoicing to die, if it be God's time, and for His honour, I protest that I die not for rebellion, confusion, bloodshed, or any violent act.

CLAVERHOUSE. I come to execute sentence of death, not to hear a morning lecture. I shall be better to you than you deserve, and allow you to go down and see your family before you suffer punishment for your proclaimed and obstinate treason. Soldiers! advance with the prisoner.

SCENE V.—Cottage of Priesthill; little Janet, who has been at the door, runs in to her mother in great terror.

LITTLE JANET. O mother! mother! what a troop of soldiers Are coming down, and father in the midst!

ISABEL. 'Tis come, the thing that I so long have feared:
Oh for the grace to grapple with this hour!

(Takes up the infant from the cradle.)

My boy! my boy! my fatherless!——

(Rushes out with the infant in her arm, and leading Janet by the hand.)

SCENE VI.—Bank before the cottage; Brown in front of the troops; Claverhouse, near him; his wife and children come forward.

BROWN. Isabel! this is the day I spake of,
When in thy father's house at Sorn I sought
Thy hand in marriage.

I told thee then what now is come to pass!
You see me summoned shortly to appear
Before the Court of Heaven: another witness,
With testimony sealed in mine own blood,
Against the rulers of this land. The call

Is instant. I must take the yawning pass
Even at a bound : brief time for leave-taking,
Or the weighty and the solemn things
Which the departing spirit fain would say.
Isabel! (*looks at her with great anxiety*)
Art thou then willing that we part?

ISABEL (*taking him by the hand, and raising both their hands
towards heaven*)—

Jesus! look down,
Behold thine handmaid offers unto Thee
This priceless jewel of her life, beyond
All reckoning rich and dear!

BROWN. Then, Answerer of Prayers, my voice is heard!
This, this is all I wait for. Not a cloud
Or speck hangs on my parting hour, but bright
As May's first sun, the path before me shines.

CLAVERHOUSE. Go to thy prayers : the morning wears apace.

BROWN. I thank thee that thou dost not cut me off,
As thy authority might well avouch,
Even at one sweep; but giv'st me time for prayer,
That I may gird my loins and trim my lamp,
Ere I go down into the darksome vale:
The vale of shadows called, but pathway rather
Unto the only true realities :
Where shadow broods no more nor any darkness,
But all things have their end, and God shines forth,
Final and manifest in all His works!

CANNON (*aside*). Most wonderful, that he of such reserved
And maiden bashful ways, who always shrank
From strangers and great throngs of people,
And from a constant lowliness of mind,

Did stammer in his speech, speaks now with boldness,
 And with a ready and commanding utterance,
 As if he were the general of these troops,
 Not their poor prisoner—and woe's me ! my victim !
 Angels are near, his ministering servants :
 Whilst I, sold to the devil ! feel through my brain,
 And through my limbs, a freezing dizziness,
 As if a curse were cleaving to my bones.

Could I undo

The fatal knot which yesternight I twisted !
 Or that the earth would crush me, ne'er to rise !

BROWN (*who has been standing for some time in silent thought, kneels down to pray. His wife and children kneel beside him*)—

“ Eternal One ! Holy and Ever-blessed !
 Inhabiting the high and holy place !
 Who with Thy glory fillest earth and heaven,
 And holdest all things in Thine infinite hand,
 And rulest all by Thine almighty will !
 Angels and men, creatures and substances
 In every place and state, are but Thy servants,
 And at Thy bidding move, or are at rest.
 All living things are Thine. The dying also
 And the dead are Thine.

“ Father of mercies !

God of all comfort ! unto Thee I come !
 To Thee my closing eyes look up ! To Thee
 My soul, about to quit this tabernacle,
 And pass into the far and unknown path,
 Lifts up its supplications ere it flies !
 For Thou alone canst guide me through this gloom,
 Where creature unto creature can no more

Give help or passage!

“Unto Thee I come!

And rest upon Thy promises, and take
Thee as my covenant God in Christ. All hope,
All other refuge I disclaim, and cling
With simple faith unto the uplifted Cross!
Hide not Thy countenance, nor take away
Thy Holy Spirit, promised Comforter,
Eternal Dove from the Redeeming Ark,
Bearing the olive-branch to drowning souls,
And tidings that the flood is overpast!

“Oh, may the death

Which now awaits me, as a mustard-seed.
Small in itself, and weak, nursed by Thy grace,
Spring in due season from beneath the clod,
And bud, and cast forth fruit, though but a handful,
In honor of Thy blessed name and cause!
And, Lord! Thy Church and people in this land,
Oh, visit them, and listen to their cry!
Build up our Zion's walls and on her towers
Be Thou the glory!”

CLAVERHOUSE. Tush with thy babbling! thou hadst leave to
pray.

But not to preach. Done with thy sermonising!

BROWN. Thou knowest not what preaching is, or prayer,
If this thou callest preaching.

‘ Bear with me

For a short space. My tongue shall soon be sealed
In silence of the dead, never again
To jar upon thine ear, or man's.
Then suffer me, thus called so suddenly,

Before the great tribunal, here to spread,
In mine own way, though barbarous unto thee,
My supplications and my wrestling thoughts
Before the Lord who is to be my Judge,
In whom I also trust as my Redeemer.
Mine is the great part in this morning's work;
Bear with me, for my soul is in its throes,
And in the travail of the immortal birth!

CLAVERHOUSE. Death and ten thousand furies! dost thou
play

Conventieler with me? (*Aside.*) The soldiers melt;
This praying must be stopped. You three in front,
File out, and instantly despatch the prisoner?

(*The soldiers do not move or obey the order.*)

BROWN. (*Still kneeling.*)

"O son of Man, who stand'st at the right hand
Of God! rend Thou the heavens, come down. Receive
My parting spirit, which now is lost in love,
In beatific love! Amen! Amen!"

(*Rises and goes forward to his family.*)

Isabel, farewell! Thou know'st where comfort is:
One in the Lord, an higher union waits us!
My sweet, unconscious, smiling babe! one kiss! (*Kisses him.*)
In malice be a babe, a man in Christ!
My daughter! be thou faithful to thy mother,
As thou hast ever been, and serve the Lord:
As thy years ripen, may thy graces grow!

(*He hangs over them and weeps, then suddenly checks
himself, and walks apart.*)

Blessed, O Holy Spirit, be Thou! that speak'st
More comfort to my heart than speaks the voice

Of my oppressors' terror to my ears.

1ST. SOLDIER. (*In a low broken voice.*)

'Tis work for butchers this, and not for soldiers.

I'd sooner dip my hands in burning brimstone,

Than in such innocent blood. My conscience stings me.

SOLDIERS. (*A murmur through the whole troops.*)

So say we all.

CLAVERHOUSE. What, curs! vile mongrels! do ye whinge,
and cower,

And change your colour at a Whiggish rant,

At old sing-songs learn'd at Conventicles?

(*Aside.*) What! knitting their brows! upon the very verge
Of mutiny! 'tis time to end this business.

(*Draws a large pistol from his belt, and presents it at
Brown.*)

Die in thy folly, rebel! peasant slave!

(*Fires; Brown instantly falls; his wife, with a piercing
shriek, falls upon the body; the troops hurry off, with
horror depicted upon their countenances; Claverhouse
remains, looking on the scene with affected indifference
and contempt.*)

CLAVERHOUSE. Woman! what think'st thou of thy husband
now?

ISABEL. (*Raising herself from the body.*)

Much did I always think of him, but more

Than ever now, when, from an humble state,

The Lord hath chosen him to be a witness,

Even unto death, for His own cause and kingdom.

CLAVERHOUSE. 'Twere a good deed to lay thee by his side.

ISABEL. And so thou wouldst, were it permitted thee!

But canst not do what hath not been decreed.

But you! how will you answer for this work?

CLAVERTHOUSE. To man I'll answer; as for God, I'll take Him
Into mine own hand. So much for gossip!

*(Claverthouse rides off; the widow wraps her
plaid over the mangled body, gathers her
children around her and sits down and
weeps. A short time having elapsed, there
arrives on the spot old Christian Steel,
from the Cumberhead, "that singular
godly and Christian woman," who comes
up to the mourners and throws her arms
around them.)*

CHRISTIAN. O Isabel! and is thy master taken,
And from thy head removed this day? and hath
He won the martyr's crown, which ever shines
The brightest mid the diadems of heaven?
And hath the Lord espoused thee to Himself,
Adopting all thy children? In one day,
How great the loss, but greater the exchange!
No wonder that thou sittest on the ground,
Gazing on earth and heaven, and telling them,
"See what the Lord hath wrought! Holy His name!"
Arise, my daughter! and dry up thy tears.

(Raising her, and still keeping her arms around her.
Enough of lamentation for the dead,
Whose death hath been a triumph, and whose triumph
Shall never fade. Enough of lamentation!
But for a moment hath the Lord forsaken,
With tenderest mercies will He gather thee.
Arise, my daughter! my fair children, rise!

Large is your need, but Grace hath large supplies.
Deeply the creature yearneth, but not more
Than may be filled at heaven's unbounded store.

This cottage henceforth shall a Bethel be,
An angel spot, which men will come to see
From the far lands, and as they see will say,
"The just man's memory passeth not away!"
The martyr of Priesthill shall be a name, "
In cloudiest times, to kindle Scotland's flame.
A sample of her ancient chosen seed,
Stedfast to truth, and strong in word and deed.
He liveth by faith, and faith lived in its fruit,
The harvest showed the richness of the root:
His soul serene in Nature's dying strife,
Faithful to death, he won the crown of Life!"

THE CHRISTIAN EXILE.

[ALEXANDER SMITH was, previous to the Restoration, minister of Colvend, lying on the Solway. By the Act 1662, he was, with many hundreds of his brethren, ejected from his charge. Still continuing the exercise of his ministry, which was then a crime, he was summoned before the High Commission Court. Sharpe was present; and Smith, in speaking to him merely styled him *Sir*. On being asked by the Earl of Rothes if he knew whom he was addressing, he replied, with a simplicity more pungent than the most laboured satire, "Yes, my Lord: I speak to Mr. James Sharpe, once a fellow-minister with myself." Chiefly, it may be supposed, for this heinous offense, he was banished to the Shetland Islands. "For four years," says Wodrow, "he lived alone in a wild desolate island, in a very miserable plight; he had nothing but barley for his bread, and his fuel to prepare, it was sea-tangle and wreck, and he had no more to preserve his miserable life." He was recalled, only to be again banished to the Orkneys; and, no further trace remaining of him, it may be concluded that he there

fell a sacrifice, at once to the rage of his persecutors and his own lofty and devoted heroism.

The poem is an attempt to bring out something of that struggle of emotions, natural to one in his situation, and to evince the triumph of faith which he so gloriously achieved. Criffel is a lofty mountain in Galloway, commanding a splendid view of the Solway Firth. Urr is a river that issues from a loch of the same name, and falls into the firth near the small island of Heston.]

SCENE.—Shetland. Winter of 1664. The exile discovered upon a rock at the sea-side, reading in Romans, chap. viii. ver. 28, to the end. The Evil Spirit near him, but invisible.

THE EXILE.

(*Reads.*) “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

EVIL SPIRIT.

’Twas sweet upon the Criffel,
When the summer winds were still,
And golden streams of sunset
Came floating o’er the hill!

'Twas sweet, from off the Criffel
To gaze across the foam;
Then glide into the valley,
Where stood thy peaceful home.

THE EXILE.

Ah, fond deceitful heart! why dost thou roam?
Where God appoints thee, is not that thy home?
Nature would chain us to some loved spot;
Grace makes the heart yield gently to the lot.
On wends the pilgrim, rough or smooth his way,
For earth hath nought to charm him, or dismay.
From every shore, and under every zone,
Straight is the passage to my Father's throne:
In life, in death, my great Redeemer lives,
And mine the all things which He freely gives.

(*Reads.*) "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

EVIL SPIRIT.

Dost hear the Urr? What music
It murmurs to the dell,
Where thy children merrily sported,
Where all thy people dwell!
Nor wife nor child is near thee,
Thou pinest in hopeless woe:
Thy home is on the ocean-cliff,

Where the wintry tempests blow,
Where the wild waves roll in thunder
Up the rock-girt Ronas Voe!

THE EXILE.

Hush, ye rebellious thoughts that madly stir!
Hark to the voice of Heaven's own messenger,
"Who shall accuse the elect? Who shall condemn?"
No weapon that is formed can injure them:
Theirs is the helmet which no blow can pierce,
Theirs the great spell that binds the universe.
Then hawl, ye tempests! rave along the steep,
The peace within lulls all these storms asleep.
Earth! yield no food. Sky! with thick darkness frown,
Rich is heaven's manna, bright the eternal crown.
Wife! I have loved, and love thee! Children! take
These tears shed sadly, fondly for your sake:
Our griefs shall knit us faster, and the love,
Divided here, shall purer burn above.
Exile from home, I still am nigh to God,
And death but leads me to His blest abode;
They only reap who faint not in the furrow,
They shall return with joy who sow in sorrow!

(*Reads.*) "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

EVIL SPIRIT.

'Tis but a drop from the inkhorn,
Thou shalt be free once more!
And the Solway sound thy welcome
From this waste and howling shore!
Thy God hath thee forsaken
Afar amidst the sea:
Why suffer in His service
Who cares no jot for thee?

THE EXILE.

Get thee behind me, Satan! now I know
'Tis thou, vile serpent! that dost wound me so;
But though a breath could waft me hence, that breath
Shall ne'er be drawn by me: Exile and death
Are light: Sin is the only fearful thing.
Thou hast not cast me off, my God! my King!
Thou that didst shine in Patmos, Thou dost shine
Even on a heart so poor, so cold as mine!
These towering rocks are Ebenezers, reared
To mark where Thou hast graciously appeared
To strengthen my weak soul: these waves that roar
In mighty majesty along the shore,
The sound of many waters that attend
Thy goings forth. In awe, in faith I bend.
Earth dwindles; time and sin and death are past;
Alpha and Omega! Thou first, Thou last,
Thou Ever-Living One, that reign'st above!
Oh for an angel's harp to sound Thy love!

(*Reads.*) "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor

life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord !”

A. B. TODD,

AUTHOR OF "HOMES, HAUNTS, AND BATTLE-
FIELDS OF THE COVENANTERS."

[From personal knowledge and from information through others who knew Mr. Todd well, but mainly from a volume entitled "Recent and Living Scottish Poets," edited by Alex. G. Murdoch, we have derived the following sketch.]

Adam B. Todd was born on the farm-ground of Craighall, in the parish of Mauchline, at the close of the first quarter of the century. His staunch old Cameronian father held that farm for a period of twenty-nine years from the Duke of Portland. His mother (Mary Gibb) was a native of Auchmillan, in the parish of Mauchline. She was a devoutly pious woman, and possessing a remarkable memory, joined to a love of old ballads and lyrics, could repeat more of these floating relics of Scottish minstrelsy than are to be found in ordinary collections. Mr. Todd's love for his mother has always been an inspiration, and in his poem of "The Circling Year" he has embalmed her beloved memory in some fifty lines entirely worthy of the beautiful

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and inspiring theme. Being one of a large family, and his father's farm being but small, our poet had to lend his services to others, working successively in the parishes of Sorn, Kilmarnock, and Fenwick. His school education had all along been irregular, but he was an early and omnivorous reader of books, wherever to be found. He had an instinct for foraging up odd volumes from unlikely quarters, and wherever resident he managed successfully to disinter from obscure and cob-webbed corners odd volumes of history, biography, and travel. He inherits from his revered mother a most retentive and capacious memory, and can repeat till this day the Psalms of David entire.

Disliking the monotony of country service, he engaged himself, while still a youth, at a tile works in Galston. He afterwards, in 1843, transferred his services to a similar manufactory in Wigtownshire. And here, having fair leisure at his disposal, he first began to express his thoughts in verse. In 1844 he removed to Wellhill Tile Works, in the parish of New Cumnock, the works ultimately passing into his own hands. In 1846 appeared his first volume, which was received by the press generally as evidencing much promise rather than as showing accomplished work. In 1874 he edited an interesting poem, written by John Johnston, a surviving Trafalgar veteran, for whom, unaided, he had nobly striven, securing for him an annual Government pension of £27 7s.

In 1876 Mr. Todd published a volume of "Poems, Lectures, and Miscellanies." The volume was generously praised by the press, and received the special commendation of the late Rev. George Gilfillan. In 1880 appeared "The Circling Year," a lengthy poem, descriptive of country life and the changing aspects of nature in each

successive month of the year. Under the tittle "Martyrland in August" we give the portion of this poem which pertains to that month of the "Circling Year," and which contains the tribute to his mother already noticed. This volume, replete as it is with high thought and verbal eloquence, discovers Mr. Todd to be a close observer of nature in all her varied hues and forms. His verse is flowing and harmonious, and he unites to a natural grace and eloquence of expression a simplicity and pathos such as not a few poets of wider fame cannot command. He has all the versatility of true genius, and is an eloquent and fluent prose writer, as well as an observant and fertile poet.

From early youth Mr. Todd became conversant with the great covenanting struggle in Scotland during the reigns of the two kings, Charles First and Charles Second, and of that also of the cruel and stolid James Second. He was a great admirer of those heroic and undaunted efforts made by the Covenanters, to resist these tyrants, and to secure for themselves, and their descendants, the blessings of that civil and religious freedom which, with the Puritans of England, they ultimately won for the nation, and which has since been of such inestimable value to the whole English speaking race all over the world. Mr. Todd, therefore, in 1886, published a volume on the subject so dear to his heart, entitled "Homes, Haunts, and Battlefields of the Covenanters," which won the praises of all the best press authorities, Mr. Spurgeon giving it highest praise in his "Sword and Trowel." A second volume appeared two years after, and was equally successful, Mr. Spurgeon not only again giving it liberal praise in his periodical, but writing a letter to the author in commendation of it. Mr. Todd has a third volume nearly ready for the press; a sec

ond edition of the two earlier volumes is much called for, they having been long out of print. He has also a collected edition of his poems, with an autobiography, ready for the press, and which will be issued very soon. He meditates, if spared, going over the whole of the covenanting field in his native land, which will extend the work to four or five volumes, thus making the work a truly national one. As yet he feels not in the least the burden of years, his step being as firm and his arm as strong as were those of that noble and heroic Bible character, Caleb the son Jephunneh, when fourscore and five years old. As strong as he was forty-five years before, he thus speaks of himself: "As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me; as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out and to come in." In this way also, we know, Mr. Todd both speaks and feels, not vauntingly, but grateful to God for this, and all His other goodness. The editor of this volume remembers with deepest pleasure a visit to Airmoss and Cameron's stone with Mr. Todd in the summer of 1892. Tramping across the stretch of desolate moor between the road and the monument, in the drenching storm, the visitors saw, as no bright sunshine and clear atmosphere could have brought out the scene,

"The moorland of mist where the martyrs lay,"

while with the vigor and fire of youth Mr. Todd described the conflict in which Cameron and his brother and others of that little heroic band won the martyr's crown.

LINES ON PEDEN "THE PROPHET'S" GRAVE.

High on a knoll above the town
 Where mellow'd comes the din,
 Up from the marts of trade, which drown
 All softer sounds within;
 Where balmy summer breezes play
 From out the glowing west,
 Or where the wintry tempests bray,
 Till, spent, they sink to rest;
 Beneath two aged, hallow'd thorns,
 Sleeps Peden good and brave,
 Where, now, fit monument adorns
 The grand old prophet's grave.

His *second* grave it is, for long
 His persecutors prowled
 O'er bleak moor and through darksome glen
 (Though Heaven in anger scowled),
 To shed his blood with those who stood
 For conscience and for right.
 They searched the cave, high o'er the flood,

With torches in the night.
They searched his brother's dwelling through,
But God protection gave,
And will'd that his dear saint should go
Down to a bloodless grave.

At early dawn, all silently,
That hasty grave was made,
Which had grown green at Auchinleck,
When it his foes invade,
And bore his corse with fiendish glee,
Away to Cumnock town,
To hang it on the gallows tree,
Which there did grimly frown.
But woman's pleading voice prevailed
The indignity to save,
Though at the gallows' foot was made
Old Peden's second grave.

These evil times have pass'd away ;
The war-trump and the drum,
The clash of arms, the battle-bray
'Mong Scotia's hills are dumb.
And since not now our necks are bent
To tyrants and the sword,
We owe it all to those who stood
And battled for the Lord.
And long will patriots drop the tear
Which pity aye will crave,
From those who come from far and near
To visit Peden's grave.

MARTYRLAND IN AUGUST.

'Tis now the busy, bounteous, autumn time,
The months move round, the year is in its prime;
The August breezes bend the ripening grain,
And lightly play along the rippling main;
The giant trees, through all the forest green,
Wave in the sultry winds with languid mein;
The bluebells kiss the streamlets as they flow,
Laughing and tinkling, as they gladly go
To join the rivers, sweeping to the sea,
Like travellers to the far eternity.

Oft, William, brother, have we traced some stream,
When golden August gave its gladsome gleam;
Threaded the forest, climbed the breezy hill,
And plucked the harebells by the mountain rill;
On shelving rock, by musical cascade,
A fragrant seat upon the wild thyme made;
With raptured eye there view'd the rainbow's rim,
Spanning the vales between the mountains dim;
Travers'd the moors, where bloom'd the heatherbell

O'er honey treasure, in the wild bee's cell;
And far down in sweet Lugar's lovely glen,
Made Israel's Psalms roll on the breeze again;
Or ring within the Covenanter's cave
(Whose time-worn steps the living waters lave),
And thought of Peden, and his weary life,
True to his God 'mid scoffers, blood, and strife;
Who, when day dawn'd came here with weary feet
Unmurmuringly, and sought this lone retreat;
Chanting these strains, which Judah's King of old
Harp'd to his God in Engedi's stronghold,—
“Thou art my hiding place, and thou shalt me
From trouble keep, from danger set me free.”
Wrestling with God, he pass'd the hours away,
While his wrapt eye pierced the far future day;
Then, when on earth the darkness settled down,
And thunderclouds clos'd in with awful frown,
Grasping his staff, when storm blasts whistled shrill,
And nimble lightnings play'd around the hill,
Would hie him far to some lone desert place,
Known only to the persecuted race;
And there with winning words would point the way
To peace and rest, beyond life's troubled day;
Yet show how wicked men, and foes of God,
To ruin rush'd by many an evil road.

O say not now, when liberty is ours,
And we sit safely in our peaceful bowers,
That these, our fathers, who for freedom fought,
And with their lives our liberties have bought,
Were bigots, and like fools wrought their own death,
And for mere trifles yielded up their breath.

In things divine they nobly would but own
Messiah on His universal throne.
To earthly king they render'd what was his,
And to heaven's Lord would not give less than this.
'They bought our freedom with their flowing blood,
When they the tyrant's cruel laws withstood.
These moors oft echoed with the martyr's moans,
Now studded with their monumental stones;
While, blazon'd on our history's brightest page,
Their fame shall flourish on to latest age.

Oft when the bracing August breezes blew,
We trode the wilds and track'd the valleys through;
On dizzy heights admir'd the rowans grow,
The clusters mirror'd in the flood below,
Where the glad stream in glassy pools would stay
A little while, then sing its seaward way.
Oft have we linger'd in some upland glen
(The favourite haunt of nature-loving men),
When cooling breezes play'd along the stream,
Bright in the setting sun's last flick'ring beam;
When winds grew hush'd, and umber'd trees stood still.
As gloaming grey crept o'er the eastern hill;
And merry reapers, busy since the morn.
With jocund laugh hied homeward through the corn,
As shone the moon, fair smiling up the east,
And the tall pine trees seem'd in silver dress'd;
And stars peep'd forth in the blue vault above,
Like angels looking down in silent love;
And earth seem'd answering up in melting song
Of living streams, which sighed and sung along.

O joyous August! treasure of the year!
I love thee, though thou tell'st of winter near.
Once more I feel myself a boy again,
Heaping with yellow sheaves the groaning wain;
A bright girl cooing round me like a dove,
My heart first fluttering at the touch of love.
That sweet-ton'd voice, ev'n now I seem to hear,
Still sounding sweeter as life's close draws near.
Her rosy lips, I see, and dimpled chin;
Her small round mouth, with faultless teeth within;
Her raven tresses round her shining brow,
Her bright blue eyes (they beam upon me now!)
Her heaving breast tempting as Eden's fruit;
Her slender waist; her small and pretty foot;
All brought a swimming sense upon my brain,
And made my blood career through every vein.
A boy no more; love-lifted, I began
A new life then—in love, a full-grown man!

O! first found, deepest, all unequal'd love!
Though long our lives, and widely though we rove;
Though beauty's fairest daughters flutter round
The paths we tread, warming the dull cold ground;
The soul no more, in their bright dazzling glow,
Flames as when first love's pulse began to go.
That nameless thrill it sends through all the heart,
Is ne'er forgotten, nor can quite depart.

But August calls up other thoughts than love—
Thoughts which make all my inmost spirit move.
Whene'er I see the reapers in the corn,
Memory brings back that sorrow-laden morn,

When Death, the dull destroyer, aim'd his dart
Not at my own, but at a Mother's heart.
Fair rose the sun, the day was calm and clear;
All calmly too, she knew the last foe near.
The golden beams played round her dying bed,
Bathing in light of heav'n her reverend head.
Closer the spoiler came, his icy breath
She felt, yet calmly whisper'd, "This is death."
In holy Psalm she spoke that inward peace
Which grew and brighten'd with her strength's decrease—
"Extol the Lord with me, and let us all
Exalt His name; He heard me at my call.
The angel of the Lord encamps around
His saints, and they deliverance have found.
O, taste with me, and see that God is good;
Who trusts in Him shall not lack heav'nly food;
The eyes of God are on the just, His ears
Are ever open, and their cry He hears;
His servants' souls the Lord redeemeth ever,
And He His saints will leave forsaken never."

With radiant countenance she pass'd away;
That, left behind, was only breathless clay.
Fast fell our tears, but for ourselves they flow'd,
And her lov'd guidance on life's perilous road;
Her wise words spoken, and her cheering smile;
Her gentle winning ways, all free from guile.
The light which ever lighten'd her own way
Show'd us the right, when lur'd to step astray.

We leave thee, mother. in the Saviour's smile;
And hope to meet thee in some after while.

O, for thy faith, and hope, and holy will;
Thy brave large heart, under each worldly ill;
That we may go, life's constant battle by,
To join thee waiting for us in the sky.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

The learned and poetical *Emeritus* Professor of Greek in Edinburgh University, was born in Glasgow on the 28th July, 1809. His father, a banker, removed to Aberdeen, when his afterwards famous son was very young. He was educated first at a private school, and when only in his twelfth year he entered the famous Marischal College, remaining there four years. He afterwards studied at the University of Edinburgh and then at those of Goettingen and Berlin in Germany. Returning to Scotland he studied law, and was called to the bar in 1834. Poetry, however, was a more congenial field for his imaginative mind, and he translated "Faust" into spirited verse. In 1841 he was appointed Humanity Professor of his old Aberdeen College, remaining there eleven years. In 1852 he was elected to the Greek chair in the Edinburgh University, which he retained till a few years ago, when he retired with honour and fame. His published works are both numerous and excellent. His translation of Homer's Iliad is alike spirited and faithful, and is looked upon by many as his most meritorious work. In 1857 he published "Lays

and *Legends of Ancient Greece and Other Poems*;" in 1860, "*Lyrical poems*;" in 1872, "*Lays of the Highlands and Islands*;" and in 1886, "*Messis Vitae: Gleanings of Song from a Happy Life*." While in the interval, numerous prose works proceeded from his pen, and although then in his 78th year, the last named volume is as fresh and as redolent with genius as any of them all. To establish and endow a Celtic chair, he raised fully seven thousand pounds; and though now in the 85th year of his age, he still continues to write, lecture, and sing his own inimitable song of *Jenny Geddes*, of how with her stool she put to rout the Popish Dean and his supporters when he proceeded to read the liturgy of Laud in her hearing.

As a poet, a patriot, and a Christian gentleman, Professor Blackie is alike famous, and admired, and beloved; and all who know him, or are acquainted with his writings and long and useful life, pray in the lines of Wordsworth,

"That an old age serene and bright
And lovely as a Lapland night
May bear him to his grave."

A warm defender of the noble stand taken by the Covenanters against the perjured tyrants and persecutors of those evil times, he has written numerous poems, songs, and ballads in their praise. "*Peden, the Prophet*," in his last volume, is too lengthy for quotation, but we give a noble sonnet on that old seer, "written," as he tells us, "at his grave under the twin thorn trees, Cumnock," and three other poems on the Covenanters and Martyrs of Scotland.

SONNET ON ALEXANDER PEDEN.

Here let me stand beneath the sacred shade
Of these twin thorns that shield a prophet's bones!
I have stood high on monumental stones,
Where Memphian Kings august made grand parade,
Not moved as here. My loves are with the braves
Who stand erect for freedom and for right,
When rampant pride, harsh law and sworded might
Would crush out thought, and stamp all men for slaves :
And such was Peden. In the day when Kings
Claimed right divine to murder honest men,
And venal bishops flapped their vulture wings
O'er God's dear saints, hunted from glen to glen,
Peden stood firm, and to his faith then shown
We owe that now we call our souls our own.

THE COVENANTER'S LAMENT.

O waly waly up the glen,
And waly waly o'er the moor!
The land is full of bloody men,
Who hunt to death the friendless poor!
We brook the rule of robbers wild:
They tear the son from his father's lands,
They tear the mother from her child,
They tear the Bible from our hands!

Last night, as I came o'er the moor
And stood upon the grey hill crown,
I saw the red flames rise wi' power
Frae the lone house o' Alik Brown.
The godless grim dragoons were there,
And Clavers spake, that swearing loon,
"So burn the nest, so smoke the lair
Of all that dare to think wi' Brown!"

O blessed Lord, who rul'st in heaven,
Who preached Thy gospel to the poor,

How long shall thy best friends be driven
Like hunted hares from moor to moor?
Arise, O Lord, Thy saints deliver.
This land from ruthless despots free!
'Neath wintry skies we sit and shiver,
But times of gladness come from Thee.

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JAMES RENWICK.

Weep, Scotland, weep! Thy hills are sad to-day,
But not with mist or rack that skirts the sky.
The violent rule; the godless man holds sway;
The young, the pure, the innocent must die!
Weep, Scotland, weep! Thy moors are sad to-day,
Thy plaided people walk with tearful eye.
For why? He dies upon a gallows-tree
Who boldly blew God's trump for Freedom and for thee!

'Tis a known tale; it hath been so of old,
And will be so again; yet must we weep!
High on red thrones the blushless and the bold
Hold state; the meek are bound in dungeons deep.
Wolves watch the pen; the lion robs the fold,
While on soft down the hireling shepherds sleep.
God's holy church becomes a mart where lies
Pass free from knave to fool, but Christ's true prophet dies.

A youth was Renwick, gentle, fair, and fine;
In aspect meek, but firm as rock in soul;

By pious parents nursed, and holy line,
To steer by truth, as seamen by the pole.
In Holland's learned halls the word divine
He read, which to proclaim he made the whole
Theme of his life; then back to Scotland came,
At danger's call, to preach in blessed Jesus' name.

They watched his coming, and the coast with spies
Planted to trap him; but he 'scaped their snare.
To the brown hills and glens of Kyle he hies,
And with a steadfast few finds refuge there.
On the black bogs, and 'neath the inclement skies,
In rocky caves, on mist-wreathed mountains bare,
The youthful prophet voiced God's tidings good,
As free as Baptist John by Jordan's sacred flood.

Fierce fumed the ruthless king. By statute law,
To sing God's praise upon the purple hill
Was treason. Courtly slaves with envy saw
One unbought soul assert a manly will,
And with his own hands from those fountains draw,
Which sophists troubled with pretentious skill
To make them clearer; as if God's own plan
For fining human dross must beg a stamp from man!

Wide o'er the moors now tramp the red dragoons,
To hunt God's plaided saints from every nook;
And from a court of bravos and poltroons
Goes forth the law which takes the blessed Book
From the free shepherd's hands, that hireling loons
May spell it to a sense that kings may brook.

Far raged o'er hill and heath the despot's sword,
But faithful Renwick preached, and owned no human lord.

Bold as when Peter in the temple stood

With John, and at the gate called Beautiful,
Healed the lame man; and stirred the spiteful mood

Of priest and high-priest, holding haughty rule;
Witless! Who weened that God's apostles should

With human law and lawyers go to school:
So boldly Renwick stood; and undismayed
With firm, unfaltering faith, God and not man obeyed.

And faithful people loved him, From Green Ayr,
Nithsdale, Glencairn, Sanquhar and founts of Ken,
Free pilgrim feet o'er perilous pathways fare,

To hear young Renwick preach in treeless glen;
And mothers bring their new-born babes, to bear
Baptismal blessings from his touch; and when
Fearless he flings the glowing word abroad,
Full many a noble soul is winged with fire from God.

Yet must he die! The fangs of law are keen;

False Law, the smooth pretender of the Right,
That still to knaves a sharp-edged tool hath been,

To give a fair name to usurping Might!
By Law round noble Hamilton, I ween,
The faggot blazed to feed proud Beaton's spite;
And now when Scotland's best to please the Pope
And Romish James, must die—'tis Law thas knots the rope!

Let loose your hounds, cold-blooded lawyers! pay

The knave to trap the saint! your work is done,
Young Renwick falls, to venal spies a prey,

And lawless Law kills Scotland's fairest son.
The grey Grassmarket heard him preach to-day,
On the red scaffold floor. His race is run.
Now kings and priests, with brave light-hearted joy,
May drain their cups, nor fear the bold truth-speaking boy!

Weep! Scotland, weep! but only for a day;
Frail stands the throne whose props are glued with gore;
For a short hour the godless man holds sway,
And Justice whets her knife at Murder's door.
Weep, Scotland! but let noble pride this day
Beam through thine eye with sorrow streaming o'er;
For why? Thy Renwick 's dead, whose noble crime
Gave Freedom's trumpet breath, an hour before the time.

THE SONG OF JENNY GEDDES.

TUNE—*British Grenadiers.*

Some praise the fair Queen Mary, and some the good Queen
 Bess,
And some the wise Aspasia, beloved by Pericles;
But o'er the world's brave women, there's one that bears the
 rule,
The valiant Jenny Geddes, that flung the three-legged stool.
With a row-dow—at them now!—Jenny flung the stool.

'Twas the twenty-third of July, in the sixteen thirty-seven,
On the Sabbath morn from high St. Giles the solemn peal was
 given;
King Charles had sworn that Scottish men should pray by
 printed rule;
He sent a book, but never dreamt of danger from a stool.
With a row-dow—yes, I trow—there's danger in a stool!

The Council and the Judges, with ermined pomp elate,
The Provost and the Bailies in gold and crimson state,

Fair silken-vested ladies, grave doctors of the school,
 Were there to please the King, and learn the virtues of a stool.
With a row-dow—yes, I trow!—there's virtue in a stool!

The Bishop and the Dean came in wi' muckle gravity,
 Right smooth and sleek, but lordly pride was lurking in their
 e'e;

Their full lawn sleeves were blown and big, like seals in
 briny pool;

They bore a book, but little thought they soon should feel a
 stool.

With a row-dow—yes, I trow!—they'll feel a three-legged stool!

The Dean he to the altar went, and, with a solemn look,
 He cast his eyes to heaven, and read the curious-printed
 book:

In Jenny's heart the blood upwelled with bitter anguish full;
 Sudden she started to her legs, and stoutly grasped the
 stool!

With a row-dow!—at them now!—firmly grasped the stool!

As when a mountain wild-cat springs upon a rabbit small,
 So Jenny on the Dean springs, with gush of holy gall;

Wilt thou say mass at my lugs, thou popish-puling fool?

No! No! she said, and at his head she flung the three-legged
 stool.

With a row-dow—at them now!—Jenny fling the stool!

A bump, a thump! a smash, a crash! now gentle folks beware!
 Stool after stool, like rattling hail, came tirling through the
 air,

With, well done, Jenny! bravo, Jenny! that's the proper
 tool!

When the Deil will out, and shows his snout, just meet him
with a stool!

With a row-dow—at them now!—there's nothing like a stool!

The Council and the Judges were smitten with strange fear
The ladies and the Bailies their seats did deftly clear,
The Bishop and the Dean went in sorrow and in dool,
And all the Popish flummery fled, when Jenny showed the
stool!

With a row-dow—at them now!—Jenny show the stool!

And thus a mighty deed was done by Jenny's valiant hand,
Black Prelacy and Popery she drove from Scottish land;
King Charles he was a shuffling knave, priest Laud a med-
dling fool,

But Jenny was a woman wise, who beat them with a stool!

*With a row-dow—yes, I trow!—she conquered by a stool!**

* A few years ago, a tablet was placed in St. Giles Church, Edinburgh, on which is engraved the following inscription from the pen of the late Lord President Inglis:—"At or near this spot, Jenny Geddes, a brave Scottish woman by protesting against the introduction of the English Liturgy into this Church, laid the foundation of Civil and Religious Liberty for these Islands."

GEORGE PAULIN.

This author was born in the village of Horndean in the parish of Ladykirk, Berwickshire, in 1812. Receiving his elementary education at the village school, he afterwards attended the grammar school of Selkirk, and entered the University of Edinburgh in 1832, at which he studied six years. For a while thereafter he acted as parish school-master at Newlands, Peeblesshire; and Kirknewton, Mid-Lothian. In 1844 he was appointed Rector of Irvine Academy, Ayrshire, which office he retained till 1877, when on his retiring

“ to crown

A youth of labour with an age of ease,”

his old pupils presented him with a gift of one thousand pounds.

Although Mr. Paulin had long been known as the writer of chaste and vigorous verses, and was the honoured and esteemed friend and associate of literary men, particularly of the renowned Christopher North, yet it was not till 1876 that he published a volume. It was most favourably re-

ceived by the press. His lines flow on with great smoothness, and so delight the ear; while their religious fervour and patriotic glow tend to purify the affections and animate the soul to desires of love and goodness. He has also a natural pathos which often moistens the eye, and makes the lip quiver with emotion. Although now past the far four-score, he still writes for the press, and seems to have lost none of his youthful vigour and power.

THE COVENANTERS.

Can Scotland's son, who, uncontrolled, may climb the heath-
ery steep,
Gaze scornfully where guards the cairn her martyr's blood-
bought sleep,
And say, 'A fanatic lies here;' and, with a pitying smile,
Descant on mad enthusiasts—the ignorant, the vile?

Enthusiasts!—by the freeman's step, that treads on Scottish
strand;
By the pure faith that sanctifies the altars of the land;
By hymns of praise, at morn and eve, unawed by fear or shame,
Poured from our peaceful hamlet homes—still honoured be
the name!

If on the plains where Wallace fought, the patriot's bosom
swell,
And the bold Switzer drops a tear upon the grave of Tell,
Shall Scotland with irreverent eye behold the wild flowers
wave

Above the mound, once stained with blood, her Covenant heroes' grave?

They sleep where, in a darker day, by dreary moss and fen,
Their blood bedewed the wild heath flower, in many a Scottish glen;

When forced to flee their humble homes, for Scotland's Covenant Lord,

They grasped, to save their holiest rights, the Bible and the sword.

They rest in peace—the enthusiasts!—who unreluctant flung
To earth the proffered gold, and scorned the lures of courtly tongue.

They rest in peace, who knew no rest when with loud curses driven,

And hunted 'mid the wintry fells, and reft of all but heaven.

Enthusiasts!—would the proudly wise, who flings his scorn
and sneer

On graves and names long hallowed by the patriot's love and tear;

Would he, when gleams in mount and vale, the persecutor's brand,

To quench with blood the altar fires of his own fatherland;

When all around are fainting hearts and falsehood's hollow smile,

The bloody foe, the traitorous friend, fierce war, and covert guile,

No hope on earth, unless he quit the banner of his God,

And crouch a slave upon the land where his free fathers trode—

Would he renounce all earth-born joys, and choose his win-
try bed
On howling heath, with darkness round, and tempest o'er his
head,
And, trusting in no arm of flesh, undaunted face the fires,
The axe, the torture, and the sword, like Scotland's Covenant
sires?

A VISIT TO PRIESTHILL.

A gowan and a buttercup
I plucked from where he stood
That morn, beside his cottage door,
Begirt with men of blood,
A place amid the lonely hills,
A moorland solitude.

There you may trace where walls were once.
The "hallen and the hearth,"
Where John at eve would lift his soul
Above the cares of earth,
And in the page of wisdom read
Redemption's wondrous birth.

And there's the little garden plot
In which, the week toil over,
On Saturday's sweet eve he'd sit
And list the lonely plover,
And watch the sun-warp'd veil of mist
Gray Wardlaw's summit cover;

And muse on Him who died to save;
Who formed the human soul;
Who made the moorland and the hill;
Who bade the waters roll.
And then in David's sweetest lay
His might he would extol.

He knew the mighty God was his,
Who hears the seraphim;
He knew the Saviour heard his song,
And that was *all* for him;
And then his cup of joy was full,
Was full unto the brim.

And when the foe came fierce with hate,
And curses volleyed fast,
He stood with all his loved ones near,
Like oak before the blast;
Stood leaning on his covenant God,
Nor shrank nor looked aghast.

He knelt, and Clavers' death-shot rang;
His brains were scattered *there*;
And calmly Isobel Weir bent down,
With inly breathed-prayer,
And gathered them while bitter jest
Rang through the morning air.

But far above the moorland dim
John's spirit soared away
With angel convoy up to heaven,
As glad and fair as they:

The martyr's harp was tuned on high
To a melodious lay.

And as we mused, my friends and I,
Upon the tombstone hoary,
Its record of the martyr times
And of the Covenant story,
We on the "light affliction" thought
And "endless weight of glory."

THE COVENANT BANNER.

Blow softly, ye breezes, by mountain and moor,
O'er the graves of the Covenant men,
By the muirland and flood that were red with their blood,
Can ye waft the old watchwords again?

“For Scotland and Christ” the breezes of old
O'er the wilds of the Westland bore,
From the Lugar and Nith to the Lothian Frith,
And the German Ocean's shore.

And where'er they blew, a prayer was breathed
And a holy psalm was sung ;
And hands were clasped and the banner grasped
When the Covenant watchword rung.

O for the brave true hearts of old,
That bled when the banner perished !
O for the Faith that was strong in death—
The Faith that our fathers cherished !

The banner might fall, but the spirit lived,
And liveth for evermore ;
And Scotland claims, as her noblest names,
The Covenant Men of yore.

THE COVENANT SANGS.

I've wandered east, I've wandered wast, and Scotlands' hills
 amang,
An' listened to the ploughman's lilt, the shepherd's e'enin'
 sang,
An' sadly mused on bygone days—for there's nae sang ava
To mind ye o' the brave auld times—the Covenant times awa.

The braid blue bannet still may cleed the pows in green Glen-
 cairn.
The laverock wake the mavis yet in howes o' auld Carsphairn;
But waes me for the Covenant Psalm, that echoed aince amang
The wastlin' hames o' Scotland, mair sweet than mavis sang.

Aince gaed ye east, or gaed ye wast, on howm or heather braes,
In clachan, cot, an' shiel was heard the e'enin' lilt o' praise;
And in the calm o' morn and even, the solemn sounds o'
 prayer
Frae Scotland's hames amang the hills, went floatin' up the
 air.

Frae Solway to Dunnottar, frae the Bass to Fenwick moor,
The Covenant life was bonnie aince, the Covenant faith was
pure;

The flow'rs o' heaven were rife on earth—frae 'neath the auld
blue bannet,
Cam' croonin' up King David's psalm, or aiblins Erskine's
sonnet.

But noo nae mair amang the glens, nae mair amang the hills,
The simple strains o' Covenant times, the muirlan' shep-
herd trills:

Ye'll wander far afore ye hear the e'enin' psalm ava—
The bonnie flowers o' Scotland's faith are nearly wed awa.

THE REV. JAMES MURRAY.

AUTHOR OF "SONGS OF COVENANT TIMES."

For more than thirty years Mr. Murray was minister of the parish of old Cumnock, Ayrshire. He was born at Langcoat, in the parish of Eddleston, Peeblesshire. Receiving his early education at the parish school of Peebles, beautifully situated in the valley of the Tweed, he passed to the University of Edinburgh, where, after the Arts course, he studied divinity under the celebrated Dr. Chalmers, and became acquainted with James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, who predicted great things of Mr. Murray as a poet. Licensed to preach shortly before the disruption in the church of Scotland, he was for a few months assistant at Kirkconnel, in Nithsdale; and when that event took place, he held on to the established church, and became minister of Old Cumnock. Almost the last of his public appearances was at a week-day gathering at the grave of Richard Cameron in "the lone and wild Ayrsmoss." It was a day of windy storm, rain, and tempest, such as is seldom seen even among the mountain wilds of Scotland at the summer

season of the year ; but his earnest, eloquent, and impassioned appeals of admonition and warning on the threatening aspect of the times rose high above the hoarse roar of the hurricane which careered along the moor. In the autumn of that year, 1874, Mr. Murray's health began to fail, and he was urged to seek for its restoration in the south of France. He said, however, that his days were numbered, and he left persuaded that he would see his native land no more. At Mentone, he lingered for a few weeks, when a voice said to him in Apocalyptic language, "Come up hither," and on the 30th day of January, 1875, he expired there in the 64th year of his age. Besides the volume of poems named, Mr. Murray published a goodly volume of excellent discourses entitled "The Prophet's Mantle: Being Scenes from the Life of Elisha." The "Songs of the Covenant Times" has a lengthy introduction, giving a capital account of the Covenanting struggle in Scotland. The first poem in the volume is "The Hill Preacher, Alexander Peden." Fourteen other poems follow, all on scenes and incidents connected with the Covenant times, and all of which possess a peculiar sweetness of versification, and a power and pathos which frequently compel a tear to trickle down the face of the reader or the listener. "Black Saturday," which is in the Scottish dialect, is a wierd, and an almost appalling poem, the subject of it being the confirming of the "Five Articles of Perth," when a thunder storm broke over the city of Edinburgh, extending also to the remoter districts, of which DeFoe says "the like had not been known in the memory of men." This event and storm, Mr. Murray has wrought into a poem of surpassing power ; as are also most of the other tragic events upon which they are all founded, and which when once read can never be forgotten.

Mr. Murray's younger brother, the Rev. Robert E. Murray, minister of New Cumnock, who still survives, is also a poet of fine taste, culture, and performance.

A CONVENTICLE IN SNOW TIME.

A DEEP-TONED, bitter, sullen wind was sweeping,
Across the upland waste;
Each living thing its covert close was keeping,
Or sought it in its haste.

Yet, when the swirling, drifted snow was filling
Each cave and sheltered nook,
A solemn, plaintive strain of praise came thrilling
Up from an ice-bound brook.

A remnant, sore-bested, had come together,
To mourn, and watch, and pray,
Unmindful of the wind and dreary weather
Of that wild, wrathful day.

A valiant and a famous standard-bearer
Was lately done to death;—
One, who of many perils was a sharer,
Had spent his latest breath.

It was a time of sorrow, dread, and grieving,
To those heart-stricken men;
And they had met, their burdened souls relieving,
Up in that stormy glen.

A youth of comely form and mien arising,
The gospel message told.
In fervour nought withholding, nought disguising,
Like faithful seer of old.

All in the wintry wind and snow-drift standing,
With cold and frost distress,
His earnest voice, the heart and ear commanding,
Moved every captive breast.

For higher gifts of hope and faith he pleaded—
For greater love and zeal;
Not vainly uttered; not unfelt, unheeded,
Passed the sublime appeal!

On him and all around the snow was falling,
Yet there they held their place.
Though, overhead, the winter-blast appalling
Pursued its rapid chase.

From morn to darkling eve they clung together,
Unwilling to depart;
The saintly love they bore to one another
Had bound them heart to heart.

And yet, a higher sentiment withheld them
From courting selfish rest;

The love of Him whose friendly eye beheld them
Unworthy thought repress.

Oh, boast not men whose heartless, cruel mission
Was tracking such as these,
To gratify a tyrant's wrong ambition—
His bigot whims to please!

And, tell us not of chivalry and daring,
Or deeds of valour done;
When, at the price of cruelty unsparing,
The palm of fame was won!

Swift come the season, when the deep devotion
Of those who braved the rage
Of banded furies, roused to fell commotion,
Shall every heart engage!

Be not far hence, bright day, when holier feeling
The world wide shall control,
And love unstinted, to the heart appealing,
Shall mould each kindred soul.

For, wheresoever PIETY is cherished,
And loved by young and old,
The grand old memories of martyrs perished
Are treasured and extolled!

THE BANNER OF THE COVENANT.

KEPT BY MR. HUGH M'GEACHAN, CUMNOCK.

I.

In a quiet old-fashioned lane,
Running, zig-zag, here and there,
In his cottage neat and plain,
In his ample elbow-chair,
In his honest crusty manner,
Sits the keeper of the banner.

II.

Bring the ancient relic forth!—
Precious 'tis, though old and tattered,
It has waved o'er men of worth,
When around it death was scattered:
It has glanced through moss and fen
Guarded by the Covenant men!

III.

Spread it out with tender care;

Slowly smooth its crumpled creases;
Use it gently, softly—there!

We've arranged its fragile pieces,
And its legend fitly scanned.

“FOR OUR GOD AND FATHERLAND!”

IV.

Hearts have throbbed with hopes and fears,

When the rustling breeze thee fluttered;
Loving looks bedimmed with tears,

Long-drawn sighs and blessings muttered—
All have greeted thee of old.
On occasions manifold!

V.

When a tyrant ruled the land,
And our sires in deserts wandered;
When a sore afflicted band,

In despair unfurled the standard,
In the desperate fight and sally
Thou didst lure the faint to rally.

VI.

Old and tattered as thou art;
Little heeded, little known,
Thou didst play a valiant part
In the struggle long bygone;
And our boasted liberty,
Partly purchased was by thee.

VII.

Far be days with passion rife,

Wherein blood and gold are squandered ;
May'st thou ue'er in civil strife,
Gleam again, time-honoured standard!
But, with peaceful fingers prest,
'Mid thy cob-webs lie at rest!

VIII.

Lie at rest; but should our soil
Menaced be with profanation,
Let the doughty sons of toil,
Worthy of their sires and station—
Worthy all of freemen's glory,
Rally 'round their standard hoary!

IX.

Lie at rest; but yet when times—
Peaceful times of joyous greeting,
Wake the happy village chimes—
Rich and poor together meeting—
Let our brave old flag's display
Cheer the fleeting holiday!

THE BLACK SATURDAY.

4TH AUGUST, 1621.

“ THERE’S a mirk clud on the sun, gudeman,
And a het gloff frae the gress;
And the kye stand thowless on the croft
Wi’ a look o’ sair distress.

“ And the sheep, a’ gathered in knots, gudeman,
Are courin’ upon the hill;
At the mid-day hour it is gloamin’ grown—
I fear it forebodes some ill!

“ There’s a red gaw in the north, gudeman,
Like a furnace seven times het;
In mirk aneth and in mirk aboon,
The lift and the heights are met.

“ I canna see where the lift begins,
Or where the hill-taps end;
And mirk, and mirker still it grows—
May heaven a’ skaith forefend!’

“ O, haud thy peace, mine auld gudewife,
Though mine een be blear’t and dim,
I can feel it mirk when it licht suld be,
And I put my trust in HIM.

“ And though our shielin’ be derk and dowf,
Yet ULAI’s stream rins clear;
And there sall we gather the gowden fruit,
Through a’ the lightsome year!”

“ O, heard ye that fearsome crash, gudeman,
Or saw ye yon flash sae bricht?
As the lift had crack’t, and the sun fa’en through,
And the sea had quenched his licht!

“ Our son is upon the hill, gudeman,
Our daughter was teddin’ hay;
And, meikle I fear that ane or baith
Come to skaith on this awsome day!”

“ O, dinna be fley’t, mine auld gudewife,
That, outhier we’re gaun to tyne—
Though wrath be sair on land and sea,
It’s nouthier ’gainst yours nor mine.

“ And I dred it wad be a day o’ dool
For the trespass o’ the land;
’Tis vengeance that cleedeth the lift wi’ mirk,
And bareth its red richt hand.

“ For a godless, graceless band are met,
This day in Edinbruch toun;

And a' to set up the thing we hate,
And to pu' the gude cause down."

"O, hear ye the thick spate fa' gudeman,
And the hailstones dirl the pane?—
Ye're welcome, children; heaven be prais'd,
We see you in life again!"

"O, faither, is this the day o' doom,
When the dead and the quick sall meet?—
A fire-clud sits on the heigh hill-tap,
And hisses 'mid hail and sleet.

"The muirfowl coured 'neath the heather-cow,
At the side o' the corbie-craw;
And they feard na him, and he feard na me.
And ae dread possest us a'!

"And the fire hung red frae my bonnet-rim,
And flichtered amang my hair;
And I thocht wi' mysel', as a prayer I said,
We never suld meet aince mair.

"And burns ran wild and roarin' rude,
Where burns ne'er wont to be;
And hadna a gude God led my steps
Ye never had looked on me!"

"And, mither, when up in the spretty cleuch,
A-kylin' the winter hay,
The mirkness fell down sae thick, I thocht
My sight hat stown away.

“And a lavrock that sang i’ the lift at morn,
Cam sklentint’ down wi’ the rain,
And I’ve keepit the wee thing in my breast
To shelter its heart frae pain!”

“Tis a day o’ wrath and strife, my bairns,
A day o’ storm and mirk;
For the king’s black bands o’ prelacy
Are conspirin’ against the kirk.”

“O, sit ye down, my children baith,
The thunder is wearin’ caulm;
And Willie sall read the blessed Buik.
And Mary sall sing the psaulm.

“And we’ll a’ kneel down by the braid hearth-stane,
And your faither in faith sall pray,
That the God o’ Grace may defend the richt.
And banish our fears away!”

HORATIUS BONAR.

The Rev. Dr. Bonar was born in Edinburgh on the 19th December, 1808. For several generations his ancestors had been ministers of the church of Scotland. Educated at the High School and the University of his native city, he was licensed to preach the gospel, the power of which he had felt from his youth up. He acted for some time as a missionary in Leith, and in 1837 he was called to, and ordained to the gospel ministry at Kelso on the Border. Here he laboured and wrote for thirty years, and then returned to his native city as the pastor of the Chalmers memorial church. Dr. Bonar is the author of numerous works in prose, all excellent and full of holy hope. His poetical works are "Lyra Consolationis," and "Hymns of Faith and Hope," rich with, and full of gospel truth, and of true and exalted poetry. Dr. Bonar died not long ago, full of years and honours; and of him ages hence, it will most surely be true, as of Abel and others who served so well their day and generation, "He being dead, yet speaketh."

THE MARTYR'S HYMN.

“The glory of children are their fathers.”—PROV. xvii. 6.

THERE was gladness in Zion, her standard was flying
Free o'er her battlements, glorious and gay;
All fair as the morning shone forth her adorning,
And fearful to foes was her goodly array.

There is mourning in Zion, her standard is lying
Defiled in the dust, to the spoiler a prey;
And now there is wailing, and sorrow prevailing,
For the best of her children are weeded away.

The good have been taken, their place is forsaken;
The man and the maiden, the green and the gray.
The voice of the weepers wails over the sleepers,
The martyrs of Scotland they now are away!

The hue of her waters is crimsoned with slaughters,
The blood of the martyrs has reddened the clay;
And dark desolation broods over the nation,
For the faithful are perished, the good are away!

On the mountains of heather they slumber together;
On the wastes of the moorland their bodies decay:
How sound is their sleeping, how safe is their keeping,
Though far from their kindred they moulder away.

Their blessing shall hover, their children to cover,
Like the cloud of the desert, by night and by day,
Oh, never to perish, their names let us cherish,
The martyrs of Scotland they now are away!

THE MARTYR'S GRAVE.

THE moss is green upon the stone ;
The stone lies heavy on the mould ;
The spot is dreary, sad, and lone ;
The forest air is cold.

The sky above is wan and bleak ;
The ground beneath is brown and bare :
No living voice intrudes to break
The tranquil silence there.

Another breeze among the boughs,
And then another leafy shower
Comes rustling down ; the sadness grows
More and more sad each hour.

The shadow of the drifting cloud
Falls chilly on these gloomy firs,
Deepening the darkness of the wood ;
Hardly a leaflet stirs.

Quick-twinkling through the leafy screen,
The stray gleams go and come ;

Half-hidden by the shade, is seen
The old and well-known tomb.

Here sleeps the martyr's weary head;
Here moulders holy dust,
With the wild wood-moss overspread,
Resting in silent trust.

No summer-flowers breathe sweetness here,
It is a lone forsaken spot,
Round lie the leaves of autumn sere,
The leaf that changes not.

Far from man's voice of love or strife,
'Tis fit that here his grave should be,
In death an outcast as in life—
Unnamed in history.

Young hopes, young friendships, joys of earth,
Had passed him by like summer-dreams;
Solemn his life had been from birth,
Like march of mountain streams.

Changeful his lot, like yon vexed sky,
When moorland breezes wildly blow;
His weary soul now rests on high,
His body sleeps below.

Rest, weary dust, lie here an hour;
Ere long, like blossom from the sod,
Thou shalt come forth a glorious flower,
Fit for the eye of God.

HUGH C. WILSON.

This living poet was born at a cottage near to Dumfries House, Cumnock, Ayrshire, about the year 1845, his father being a sober, sensible ploughman in the employ of the Marquis of Bute. His school time past, young Wilson learned the gardening business, and has been for a length of time in England, and at present fills the situation of head gardener and farm manager to a nobleman in the south of England. Studios, pious, and a patriot, his country's heroes are dear to his heart; and so also are the beauties of Nature, which inspire him to sing of her charms. In 1874 he published "The Rustic Harp," and in 1876 "Wild Sprays from the Garden;" both of which volumes are alike creditable to his head and his heart.

COVENANT TIMES.

Awake, my harp! ring out thy notes, ring out thy richest
strain,
O'er those who boldly dared for love of God's cause to be
slain;
Tell thou each Christian of to-day, who by the wayside
faints,
Of times when Scotia's plaid was dyed with life-blood of the
saints;
When everywhere, by hill and glen, within the stricken land,
Who held the Bible, also held their life within their hand;
When righteous men were hunted down like wild beasts of
the field—
Brave men, who in the cause of truth, would rather die than
yield.

Lo! deep from wild sequestered glen, amidst the Sabbath
calm,
Arises through the early mists, to Heaven the morning psalm;
Then on the sward, when knees are pressed and every heart
re,

Their hearts rise with the speaker's voice, up to the throne in prayer.

The aged pastor reads the word from God's own sacred page—
Perhaps, where David sought the Lord to quell the heathen's
rage;

Again a psalm they sweetly chant, then kneeling down to
pray:

“Oh! help us, Lord, to do thy will—protect us through this
day.”

With Bible placed upon a rock, he then expounds the word:
But, hark! like wind among the trees, a murmuring is heard,
As when far out the sailor hears across his trackless path
The tempest breathe o'er ocean vast a telegram of wrath.
An awful stillness intervenes, then borne along they hear,
Much louder now, like troubled winds, the murmur coming
near.

Each heart stands still, the cheeks are blanched, the speaker's
voice is dumb;
Their sentry calls from off the height, “The king's dra-
goons—they come!”

“Be calm, be calm, my children dear, and on the Lord rely;
He ever ready is to save the needy when they cry;
Mysterious unto us His ways, but, blessed be His name,
We yet may wear a robe of light—our foes a crown of shame.
Adown the glen now while you may, seek safety all in flight,
But draw your blades, ye trusty few, who yet may have to
fight;

The aged and the feeble first; haste! for they hurry near;
The women and the children next; ye strong men, guard the
rear.”

The holy man, when left alone, sank down behind a rock.

“Heed, heed not me, O Lord!” he cried, “but spare, oh spare
Thy flock!

Thy hand lies heavy on the land, oh lift Thy chastening rod,
If ’tis Thy holy will to hear my humble prayer, O God!

And bless wherever met this day, in cave or lonely glen,

Thy chosen few, and teach them, Lord, to bear themselves
like men;

And help Thy humble servant now, and hear his earnest cry;
If in his en’m’s hand he fall, oh give him strength to die.”

The captain came. “Now hoary scamp to flames thy Bible
fling,

And on your knees go down and swear allegiance to the King.”

“To Heaven’s high King alone; but not to false King James,
or thou,

While life blood warms this aged frame, these knees will ever
bow.”

“Form round, and ready then, my lads, his blood be on his
head.

“King James or death?” “Heaven’s King alone! I have
already said.”

Flash! went the guns, down sank the saint, thrust by the
tyrant’s rod,

With horrid oath into his ears, before thy throne, O God!

O Scotland! Scotland! scenes like these may well draw burn-
ing tears,

When fiendish men insult thy maids and murder all thy seers.

But yet tho’ rude and rough equipped, thy Hillmen were not
slow,

When band and band together met to face the ruthless foe.

Then as a hundred sturdy men cleave down the forest oaks,
'Midst battle's shout and horrid din, so rose and fell their
strokes.

Plumed helmets then were cleft in twain—"Our hearts and
homes," they cry;
And fighting fell, or conquered there, but scorned to yield
or fly.

On many a lonely mountain waste, by many a trackless way,
A cairn tells where a hero sleeps, to Scotland of to-day.
Lo! far on lone Corngellichoor moor, where heath fowls build
their nest,

And lambkins frisk among the knowes—three martyrs lie at
rest.

At Cumnock, too, now undisturbed beneath the Peden's Thorn,
Three lie beside the Seer, who held the tyrant's law in scorn.
And hundreds more the country round, from age to tender
youth,

A mighty cloud of witnesses, who died for love of truth.

Ring out, my harp, o'er scenes like these—ring out thy loft-
tiest strain,

In memory of those who dared for God's cause to be slain.
Tell of the Covenanting times, when Scotland boldly thrust
Those cursed chains beneath her feet, and trod them in the dust.
Praise to the Covenanters' God, to whom all praise is due,
That Bibles now in every hand are seen the country through.
And praise be to His holy name, that ever men were found
To beard the brutish Roman beast and smite him to the ground.

JOHN WRIGHT.

In the year 1805 this poet was born at Auchincloigh, the birthplace of the Covenanter, Peden, in the parish of Sorn, which lies high up among the Ayrshire hills. When but a child his parents removed into the town of Galston in the valley of the Irvine. Early in life, and but poorly educated, he was apprenticed to the weaving trade with a good and intelligent Christian named George Brown, well versed in religious literature. Wright's mind, however, soared off into the realms of poetry, which he cultivated by lonely walks among the woods and streams which surround the old Castle of Cessnock, once the seat of a truly noble family—the Campbells—mentioned in Knox's History of the Reformation, and attached to the Covenanting party till the Revolution of 1688. Improving his education and cultivating poetry, Wright, in 1828, published "The Retrospect," a lengthy poem in two cantos, which was reviewed and praised by Professor Wilson in Blackwood's Magazine. It is sad to think that the success of his volume threw him off his balance, and that becoming ad-

dicted to drink, he parted with his wife and became a wanderer and an outcast. He continued, however, to write, and at times tried to struggle back into the paths of virtue and sobriety, when he would launch terrible and powerful poetical imprecations against intemperance. But his self-control was gone. At last one night about the year 1846, he was found in the streets of Glasgow in a deplorable and unconscious state of intoxication, and was carried to the Infirmary, seemingly dying. A Galston man was then employed there who recognized him; but in spite of all medical efforts he died next day. The Galston men then resident in Glasgow, sad and sorrowful at the melancholy end of one so gifted, gave him a decent burial, even among the great where so many poets lie—in the Necropolis. A cast of his finely intellectual head was taken, which, however, came to a disastrous end, like the poet's self. For a while it was kept in the Infirmary. Ultimately it came into the possession of a Galston man, and was taken to that town. Meeting with an accident after sundry repairs, it was at last "used up," as the mistress of the house said, "in scorin the kitchen floor!" His works had reached a third edition before his sad and melancholy end. When we think of what he was, what he might have become, and what he became, by tampering with the demon drink, well may we exclaim, with that fine moral poet, the Rev. George Crabble—

"Ah! fly temptation, youth, refrain, refrain!
Nor let me preach for ever and in vain!"

THE BATTLE OF PENTLAND HILLS.

Shall that dread hour of glory,
Till Time himself grow hoary,
Ignobly die in story
Or in a Briton's ear:
That hour with horror spangled,
When Liberty lay mangled,
On Pentland mountains drear?

A faithful few, unbending,
To deathful storms impending,
Where seen these heights ascending,
At early watch of morn;
Pursued, but yet unfearing,
They sung their songs endearing,
While a bloody foe appearing,
Laughed the heavenly sounds to scorn.

For Freedom they have striven,
In the open face of Heaven:

Afar, 'mongst deserts driven,
 Their front defiance wore.
On the heaths above Dunedin,
Soon the patriot band lay bleeding,
And the carrion fowl were feeding
 Their young with Martyr's gore.

But while their hands were wielding
The spear, their hearts were building
On prayer, hope, faith, unyielding
 To the myrmidons of crime:
By the hell-let-loose of Neros,
Whose names like simoons sear us,
Were massacred the heroes
 Of the Covenant sublime.

Then songs of mountain gladness
Were changed to strains of sadness;
While havoc, in its madness,
 Wrought all around despair;
Hope seemed for ever blighted,
Sweet mercy fled affrighted,
From blackest fiends united,
 Torn enting earth and air,

But the sword of justice glancing,
Come in the rear advancing,
Heaven's armoury elancing
 Its rays of dreadful sheen:
Then came vindictive Ruin,
A monarchy undoing,

That long had been imbruing
In blood its hands unclean.

Then dawned the golden season,
Of Liberty and Reason;
The hated name of treason
Stamp'd no more on Faith was seen.
The Muses from Aonia,
Sought out sweet Caledonia,
And mists of Pandemonia,
Dispersed from thence bedeen.

Then smiled each peaceful village,
No more given o'er to pillage;
Then flourished trade and tillage,
Every blessing we adore
Be hallowed and defended,
The sceptre that 's extended,
The Monarch that ascended
To gladden Albion's shore.

REV. HENRY SCOTT RIDDELL.

One of the last, and likewise one of the very best of the great Border bards, was the Rev. Mr. Riddell, who was born at Sorbie, in the sweet pastoral valley of the Ewes in the south-eastern part of Dumfriesshire, on 23rd September, 1798. His father soon after removed to the wild district of Eskdalemuir and by and by to Ettrick forest. The future poet was early put to the keeping of sheep, having received only a very elementary education. He, however, taught himself among the solitudes of mountain, valley, and stream; his converse with nature also engendering poetic thoughts and aspirations in his bosom. So well did he train himself, that he was able to enter the University, first at St. Andrews, and afterwards that of Edinburgh, and in due time was settled minister of Teviothead, and continued most faithfully to perform the duties of his office till 1841, when he was laid aside for some years by a painful mental malady, from which, however, he completely recovered, but did not again resume his ministerial duties, the late Duke of Buccleuch generously allowing him to retain the cottage

he had built for him there, and also attaching to it a little farm, rent free. Mr. Riddell died suddenly on the 30th July, 1870, greatly lamented not only in the district, but far beyond it.

Mr. Riddell was widely known and held in high repute as a poet. In 1831 he published his "Songs of the Ark," which at once lifted him into fame. Several other volumes followed at intervals; his songs being among the very best we have, and his "Scotland Yet," and "Ours is the Land of Gallant Hearts," will live with the language. His lengthy poem, too, "The Sea-grey man," is a most powerful and moving one; while nothing of the kind almost ever equalled that most touching and musical lyric, entitled "Our Ain Folk," of which we cannot refrain from giving the concluding stanza which shows the warmth of his affections, and his hopefulness for the better life in the world above:

"I wish we were hame to our ain folk.

Our kind and our true-hearted ain folk,

Where the wild thistles wave o'er the beds o' the brave,

And the graves are the graves o' our ain folk.

But happy-gae-lucky, we'll trodge on our way,

Till the arm waxes weak and the haffet grows grey;

And though in this warl' our ain still we miss,

We'll meet them again in a warl' o' bliss.

And then we'll be hame to our ain folk,

Our kind and our true-hearted ain folk,

Where far yont the moon in the heavens aboon,

The hames are the hames o' our ain folk."

Living in a district "flowered with martyrs' graves," Mr. Riddell makes frequent reference to them and to the Cov-

enanating struggle in his poems, particularly in one of some 1600 lines, entitled, "This Heart must Bleed for Thee : A Tale of Covenanting Times." We give here his poem on the brave men who fell at Pentland Hills in 1666, which he entitles "Rullion Green."

RULLION GREEN.

While lone through the woodland my path I pursue,
Where the soft breeze of morning unceasingly sighs,
Yet scarce stirs the boughs o'er the night's deeper dew,
So long in the forest recesses it lies;

Oh! shall not the thoughts to high heaven belong,
Where now live exalted the faithful and good,
Who here, when the tide of oppression ran strong,
For faith and for freedom the spoiler withstood?

The sunshine beams bright on the heath of the hill,
And beauty and bliss mark the scenery of day;
There's music and joy in the voice of the rill,
And the wild rose in loveliness waves by the way.

Yet would there be joy in the voice of the stream,
And beauty on earth from the heavens above,
All blended in light like a bliss-bringing dream,
If our land were no land of true freedom and love?

More rich is the flower, and the sunshine more bright,
In the isles lying far o'er the ocean's wide wave;

But when shall the lawn and the flower bring delight,
That is trod by the step of the tyrant and slave?

On the breast of yon steep, Lo! the warrior's grey cairn,
Who bled for his country, still rising is seen;
And far 'mong the moorlands, the heath and the fern
Wave round where the grave of the martyr grows green

And these are the mighty, the morally brave,
Who died an inheritance thus to convey
That is more than the wealth that can come by the slave,
And all that is found 'neath the dwellings of day

'Twas the light of high heaven that fired (though so frail)
The heart of humanity, still to withstand
The powerful and proud, who with death would assail
The lowly and faithful that lived in the land.

Defying that God, in their merciless strife,
That erst sent to save them His own only Son,
They lavished in madness the powers of their life
In the soul-searing servitude of the Foul One.

Oh, pause by the cairn, yet still more by the grave
That far on the moor for the martyr was dug,
And ask if 't were more not true freedom to save
Than won all that proud ones delighted to hug.

The King in yon halls drank his deep draughts of wine,
While flatterers around sent the ruthless abroad,
The progress to mar of the radiance divine,
And murder the peaceful, and browbeat their God.

They hemmed in the valley and hunted the moor,
And pilfered the gear that the fugitives left;
And mocked the frail mother and children, now poor,
Of their father and home and their holding bereft.

Thus press would the power that enforced them to bear,
Yet left for the sufferer no path for appeal,
Till wild desperation arose from despair,
To ward off the blows that oppression would deal.

Here hoary and hot came the wild Laird of Binns,
Whose cheek ne'er the tear-drop of pity bedewed;
But victory is poor inhumanity wins
O'er those it to woe and to want hath pursued.

Yet sigh not for them with a bosom dismayed
That here sleep so sound where they died on the lea;
Though the turf by the stranger might o'er them be laid,
'T was a turf of the land which they fell to make free.

And God will remember, below and above,
The heart that approved itself fearlessly true
To the cause which His influence has taught it to love,
Where the foemen are fierce and the faithful are few.

Here, here, too, behold how the stone has been reared,
The memorial of those, still through ages to stand,
Who died in resisting the foes that appeared
'Gainst the freedom and faith of their own native land.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

This famous song and ballad writer was born at Blackwood, near Dumfries, on 7th December 1784. Educated at a school kept by a staunch Cameronian, the future poet was put as an apprentice to learn to be a stone mason, and in time became one of the best builders in the district. A great reader from his very early years, he began to write poetry when very young. Before he was twenty he made the acquaintance of the Ettrick Shepherd, who soon became impressed with the genius of the youthful poet, and afterwards thus introduced him as one of the competing bards in "The Queen's Wake:—"

“ And long by Nith the maidens young
Shall chant the strains their minstrel sung
At ewe-bright or at evening fold,
When resting on the daisied wold,
Combing their locks of waving gold,
Oft the fair group enrapt shall name
Their lost, their darling Cunningham:—”

His was a song beloved in youth,
A tale of weir, a tale of truth."

Having contributed some ballads to Cromek's "Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song," Cunningham was induced to go to London and was fortunate, after some hardships endured, to get an engagement in the establishment of Sir Francis Chantrey, the sculptor, as superintendent, and remained with him till his death, nearly thirty years after, writing much, and writing well both in poetry and prose. His songs, especially, are with those of Burns, Hogg and one or two others, the best in the language. Cunningham, while in London, came into close contact with most of the great men of his time, and "Honest Allan," as he was familiarly called, was a favourite with them all. His heart, however, was constantly in Scotland, and of the green hills of Galloway he loved best to sing and to talk. When his master, the great sculptor, a little before his death, was showing Cunningham the plan of the granite tomb in which he wished to be buried in Norton churchyard, Derbyshire, his native place, he said to him, with a look of anxiety: "But there will be no room for you." "Room for me!" exclaimed Cunningham. "I would not lie like a toad in a stone. Oh! no; let me lie where the green grass and the daisies grow, waving under the winds of the blue heaven." And so it soon came about to both. Chantrey lies in his granite tomb; and only a year after him, Cunningham was laid to rest in the pretty green cemetery of Kensal Green, when he had only reached the age of fifty-seven years. His master, who loved him greatly, left him a legacy of two thousand pounds, which, however, he did not live long to enjoy. Had his life been spared but a

little longer, he intended to retire and spend the remainder of his days in the peaceful and picturesque valley of the Nith.

In his tales, Cunningham makes frequent reference to the Covenanters and their persecutors. Of his poems relating to this dismal period, the best is that on General Dalzell; and it is one of terrible and Elijah-like power, moving along like the rapid and irresistible tread of the war-horse of the old persecutor himself when he hewed down the west country peasantry at the battle of Pentland Hills. It is entitled "The Downfall of Dalzell."

THE DOWNFALL OF DALZELL.

The wind is cold, the snow falls fast,
The night is dark and late,
As I lift aloud my voice and cry
By the oppressor's gate.
There is a voice in every hill,
A tongue in every stone;
The greenwood sings a song of joy,
Since thou art dead and gone :
A poet's voice is in each mouth,
And songs of triumph swell,
Glad songs that tell the gladsome earth
The downfall of Dalzell.

As I raised up my voice to sing,
I heard the green earth say :
Sweet am I now to beast and bird,
Since thou art past away,
I hear no more the battle-shout,
The martyr's dying moans ;
My cottages and cities sing

From their foundation stones
The carbine and the culverin's mute—
The death-shot and the yell
Are twin'd into a shout of joy,
For thy downfall, Dalzell.

I've trode thy banner in the dust,
And caused the raven call
From thy bride-chamber to the owl
Hatched on thy castle wall;
I've made thy minstrel's music dumb,
And silent now to fame
Art thou, save when the orphan casts
His curses on thy name.
Now thou may'st say to good men's prayers
A long and last farewell:
There's hope for every sin save thine—
Adieu, adieu, Dalzell!

The grim pit opes for thee her gates,
Where punished spirits wail,
And ghastly death throws wide her door,
And hails thee with "All hail!"
Deep from the grave there comes a voice,
A voice with hollow tones,
Such as a spirit's tongue would have
That spoke through hollow bones:—
Arise, ye martyred men, and shout
From earth to howling hell:
He comes, the persecutor comes!
All hail to thee, Dalzell!

O'er an old battlefield there rushed
A wind, and with a moan
The severed limbs all rustling rose
Even fellow, bone to bone.
Lo! there he goes, I heard them cry,
Like babe in swathing band,
Who shook the temples of the Lord,
And passed them 'neath his brand!
Cursed be the spot where he was born;
There let the adders dwell,
And from his father's hearthstone hiss:
All hail to thee, Dalzell!

I saw thee growing like a tree—
Thy green head touched the sky—
But birds far from thy branches built,
The wild deer pass'd they by:
No golden dew dropt on thy bough,
Glad summer scorned to grace
Thee with her flowers, nor shepherds wooed
Beside thy dwelling place.
The axe has come and hew'd thee down,
Nor left one shoot to tell
Where all thy stately glory grew;
Adieu, adieu Dalzell!

An ancient man stands by thy gate,
His head like thine is gray—
Gray with the woes of many years—
Years four-score and a day.
Five brave and stately sons were his;
Two daughters, sweet and rare:

An old dame, dearer than them all,
And lands both broad and fair:—
Two broke their hearts when two were slain,
And three in battle fell—
An old man's curse shall cling to thee:
Adieu, adieu, Dalzell!

And yet I sigh to think of thee,
A warrior tried and true,
As ever spurred a steed, when thick
The splintering lances flew.
I saw thee in thy stirrups stand,
And hew thy foes down fast
When Grierson fled, and Maxwell fail'd;
And Gordon stood aghast;
And Graham, saved by thy sword, raged fierce
As one redeem'd from hell.
I came to curse thee—and I weep:
So go in peace, Dalzell.

WILLIAM McDOWALL.

William McDowall was a native of the town of Dumfries, and early became connected with the press. During the last forty years of his life he was the able editor of "The Standard," the leading newspaper of his native town. The author of numerous prose works, he was also the author of a volume of poems which reached a second edition. A patriot and a Christian, all Mr. McDowall's poems breathe a pure and a lofty tone. The best known are "The Martyr of Erromanga," and "The Nithsdale Martyrs;" the latter being one of the best poems on the Martyrs of the Covenant which we have. Mr. McDowall died suddenly on the 28th of October, 1888, aged 74 years.

THE NITHSDALE MARTYRS.

Wax frail and crumble into dust
Each fretted tomb and storied bust;
Memorials of the perished proud,
Be your infirm foundations bowed.
Let shattered shaft and plumeless crest
Time's desolating march attest;
The gilded scroll and blazing urn
To blank and voiceless stone return;
That truncheon to the earth be thrown,
Its severed sand like ashes strewn;
That diadem to darkness cast,
Its emblematic glory past:—
Let these memorials, one and all,
In unrecorded ruin fall;
Yea, let the poet's lofty shrine *
Its laurelled garniture resign,
And sink, with dark oblivion hid;

* The monument to the poet Burns stands a little way to the east of that raised in St. Michael's Churchyard, Dumfries, to the Martyrs.

But spare this rude gray pyramid!
Time! take the rest without a tear,
But turn aside, nor trample here.

Though well the chisel and the lyre,
To consecrate the dead conspire,
And hearts beloved are hushed below,
Who merit all which these bestow:
Yet if thy path must needs be traced
By mouldering shrines and tombs defaced—
If these which Art has called her own
But form a footstool for thy throne,
To tremble 'neath thy tiresome tread,
Then mingle with the insulted dead;
If thou canst not thy foot refrain,
Take these proud piles which crowd the plain;
But, as thou would'st a blessing earn,
Spare, spare the Martyr's humble cairn.

Memorial of that doughty band
Whose blood so often dyed the land—
Of those who trode a toilsome path,
Thorn-planted by the tyrant's wrath—
Who nobly braved contempt and shame,
Contending for Messiah's claim,
And leagued in brotherhood and love,
For His Crown-rights and Covenant strove:
Witness, ye hills that point to heaven,
How true the testimony given!
Witness, ye streams which calmly glide,
How fearfully their faith was tried!
Witness, thou vale of Nith so fair,

Their hours of weariness and care—
Their days of dread and nights of pain,
When shelter there they sought in vain!
Thy dusky caves their shadows lent;
Thy craggy glens their foliage bent
To clasp within their dim embrace
The remnant of that stricken race!
But cruel men have eagle eyes—
They pierced the folds and found the prize;
They found them with long watching tired,
But yet with deep devotion fired.
With haggard look and raiment torn,
With visage marred, and famine-worn!
How wasted now each stalwart frame!
But still their high resolve the same—
To worship, though a host said nay,
As conscience pointed out the way:
In its blest exercise they fell,
Sore stricken in the mountain dell;
'Mid taunt and scorn they died—they died
By desert stream and lone hillside!

And this grey pyramid was piled
To keep their memory undefiled,
That men unborn might understand
The claim of Scotland's martyr band:
Then spare its stones, thou spoiler Time!
To touch them were presumptuous crime!

The stern old Carle, with scythe and glass,
Just pointed to the drooping grass,
Which winced and withered 'neath his frown;

“So shall its stones be shaken down!
I travel on—beneath my tread
Earth’s mounmental piles are laid;
Though fools would to their tablets trust
The records of the proud or just,
And bright or brave achievements done,
I triumph o’er them every one:
So must this feeble structure fail,
And buried*be its woeful tale,
Swept from the register of years,
Its narrative of blood and tears:
In vain to harm it not you call.
What reck I, if oblivion’s pall
Above these boasted martyrs fall?”

Then do thy worst, though large thy boast,
Their hallowed names shall ne’er be lost;
Their deeds, their wrestlings, their renown,
Shall pass to latest ages down:
These cannot fall beneath thy sway
Like this frail chronicle of clay.
Long as heroic worth remains
To thrill the pulse in human veins;
Long as thyself their fame shall last—
Yea, longer; for when Time is past,
The Martyrs’ memory shall not die;
’Tis star-traced in yon cloudless sky.

JOHN STRUTHERS.

Mr. Struthers is the author of “The Poor Man’s Sabbath,” and numerous other meritorious works. He was born at Forefaulks in the parish of East Kilbride, Lanarkshire, 15th July, 1776. His father was a shoemaker there for the space of forty years. His mother, an eminently Christian woman, taught him to read from the Proverbs of Solomon, and the Shorter Catechism; and when very young, he could read any chapter in the Bible, a knowledge of, a love for, and an obedience to which he manifested throughout all his after life. In the higher branches of his education he was much assisted by Mrs. Baillie, and her daughter Miss Joanna Baillie, the celebrated poetess, who lived near by, and took a warm interest in the bright little boy. When only seven years of age he was sent to a farmer to herd cows. Mrs. Baillie soon after sold off her effects and removed to London, to her son, the celebrated Dr. Matthew Baillie; and when the little lad returned home at the end of the summer, and found that his kind friends were gone, not to return, the vexation of mind threw him into a fever for six weeks. The next year, his eighth, was

spent at school, where he made remarkable progress. After this, and for other three and a half years, he again acted as cowherd to his grandmother, on a small upland farm in the neighbourhood. His books then, which he read in the fields, were the histories of Wodrow, Knox and Calderwood; the Apologetical Declaration, Naphtali, Hind Let Loose, Causes of God's Wrath, and the like. He was afterward engaged, and while yet young, to work on a farm in the parish of Cathcart. The servants here, as he relates, "were brutally ignorant, filthy in conversation, and swore horribly." The "Gudeman" was not much better, although "he always said grace to their meals, but it was uniformly in the same words. He sometimes made worship in the evening, when the whole family commonly fell asleep, and he himself sometimes along with them." In a cottage close by, however, lived a godly couple where the future poet was welcome; and on their clean hearth-stone he read a chapter of the Bible in the forenights; this, then, being the only book he had. To this couple he owed it, he always said, that the manifold temptations, and the ill example to which he was subjected, did not sweep entirely away all the good he had previously acquired.

In his fourteenth year he sat himself down beside his father to learn shoe-making, and afterwards perfected himself at the trade in Glasgow. At the age of twenty-two he married, settling for three years in East Kilbride, when he removed to Glasgow. Having read much during these latter years, he, in 1803, published a poem entitled "Anticipation," on the threatened invasion of Britain by Bonaparte, which was well received. In 1804, a few weeks before the appearance of "The Sabbath," by James Graham—he published "The Poor Man's Sabbath," a poem

of over one hundred stanzas in the Spenserian measure, which was at once recognized as a noble production, and has since passed through numerous editions. Next appeared, "The House of Mourning, or, The Peasant's Death;" also an excellent and impressive poem, but less popular than "The Poor Man's Sabbath," or than "The Ploguh," "Dychmont," and others by which it was followed.

In 1819, Mr. Struthers entered the printing office of Khull, Blackie and Co., Glasgow, as corrector of the press. Here he assisted in editing an excellent edition of Wodrow's History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland. He also wrote several prose works of much merit.

In 1834, he was appointed Librarian of the Stirling Institution, and continued in it for fifteen years. We need not follow Mr. Struthers farther. He died suddenly in 1853, in the 78th year of his age, and as has been well said of him—"He was a man of strong sense, clear intellect, fine imagination, of warm sympathies, strong feelings, generous sentiments, and powerful emotions, controlled, subdued and regulated by the fear of God, and love of his Redeemer and fellow-men. He was truly a remnant of the Scottish mind and heart, cast in the mould of the best days of her intellectual and religious elevation."

Our first extract is from "The Poor Man's Sabbath," and is entitled an "Admonition and Warning."

ADMONITION AND WARNING.

And thou, my country, Caledonia, hail!

Tho' bleak thy hills and boisterous be thy shore,
Though towering high thy sister's fame prevail,
And thou 'mong nations lift'st thy voice no more!
Time was, thou, too, could'st boast a Royal power;
The patriot Prince, the gifted Seer, were thine,
Who strong, in danger's overwhelming hour,
Did hand to hand with dauntless ardour join,
Down thy wild glens to pour the light of Truth divine!

And heaven upon the high emprise did smile.

Thy royal splendours all have passed away.
But, in despite of either force or guile,
Their labours bless thee to this very day!
Thy simple institutions still display
The bright conception of their mighty mind;
And Labour smiles, and Poverty looks gay,
And poor Misfortune dries her tears to find
Truth, Mercy, Light, and Law, and Liberty combined!

But O, beware! lest any thought of pride,
 When looking at the course which thou hast run,
 In thy own wisdom lead thee to confide,
 And claim the merit due as all thine own!
 Nor think for thee these gifts were cheaply won!
 No! they were earn'd with tears, and toil, and blood!
 Power's minions all in opposition shone,
 And on their side, defiance breathing loud,
 With dreadful tortures arm'd, gaunt persecution stood!

Though Murrays, Loudouns, Warristons, Argyles,
 Knoxes and Melvilles, Guthries, and Cargills,
 And Kids, and Kings, and Camerons, and McKails,
 And Welches, have adorned thy heath-clad hills;
 Yet thou hast had (authors of nameless ills)
 Thy Sharps and Beatons, bloodthirsty and base;
 Thy Rotheses, McKenzies and Dalzells,
 Foul names, accurs'd to all succeeding days!
 And one incarnate fiend in Graham thy page displays!

These the vile tools of a perverted race,
 Whom mercy could not melt nor judgment awe;
 For ever straining after Rome's embrace,
 And substituting headstrong will for law;
 Till pitying Heaven thy deep affliction saw,
 And from their heights the maudling miscreants hurl'd,
 Giving thee to the rule of great Nassau!
 Who Freedom's flag with royal hands unfurl'd,
 And, blessing thee, was made a blessing to the world.

MARTYRLAND AND ITS HEROES.

From "Dychmont."

How wide the landscape's wondrous stretch,
That eye may scan, that hand may sketch—
From lofty Arran's high peaked brow,
To where Kintyre shuts up the view,
And faintly glimmering through the haze,
Like isles seagirt, their heads they raise,
Mountains on mountains, towering vast,
Along the sea-indented coast,
From sounding Marahanish, far
Into the wastes of wild Braemar,
From the soft west, where sweet they smile,
The hills of Cowal and Argyle;
By Drymen's bare and rugged dells.
And by the Lenox lovely fells;
By the bleak Shots, and dimly seen
With Tinto's towering heights between,
The weary Pentlands, sad to see,
Still weeping wounded Liberty,

With shield cut through and banner torn,
Left on them in her blood to mourn,
While her best friends on scaffold bled,
Or in dark dungeons pined and died.
By Carnwath, famed for horse and iron,
And gay Carstairs, Monteith's pet bairn;
By Carluke, with its fruitful gills,
By Lesmahagow's weeping rills,
In fancy's ear that murmur still
The wrongs of Cameron and Cargill,
And Shields, and Renwick, young and good,
The last who nobly shed his blood,
Firm, and consistent to the death,
For Scotland's Covenanted faith.
And, by yon dark and narrow stripe,
The rugged ridge of barren Kype,
To lofty Loudoun, o'er his bog,
Still smiling proudly on Drumclog;
Where Claverse, in his mad career
Of ruthless murder, learned to fear
A bold though simple peasantry,
Who stood for God and Liberty.
By dark Drumduff, and Hairshaw wide,
And Elrig brown, in bent array'd,
By watery wastes, extending far,
From Balangeich round green Dunwar;
Where haunted Croilburn's head streams twine
Through the black bogs of lone Lochgoin,
To where the sea-born breezes roam
O'er Largs, far-famed, and Kilmalcolm.

Thee, Bothwell, can I pass, nor yield
 A tear to thy ill-fated field,
 Where valour came, but wisdom not,
 And common prudence was forgot;
 Where fell the banner of the just,
 And truth was trampled in the dust,
 Freedom became absurd disorder,
 And victory lost her name in murder!
 Yet time has each external trace
 Erased of all this foul disgrace,
 And, Bothwell, o'er thy peaceful river,
 Thy bank it blooms as green as ever.

* * * * *

There every rock, and stream, and tree,
 Has its wild lay of liberty,
 Inlaid by law, whose sacred charters,
 Embalmed are with the blood of martyrs;
 The savour of whose gracious names
 The ardour of our zeal inflames,
 Like them, supremely to regard
 "The recompence of the reward;"
 The grace that in the present lies,
 To be reveal'd, when sun and skies.
 And earth, and sea, one destined day,
 Like morning clouds have passed away.

Such were the characters sublime
 The giants of the olden time,
 Thy Wisharts, Hamiltons, and Mills,
 That, Scotland, over all thy hills,
 By their death-fires, awake, in sooth,

Thy living light of gospel truth.
Such were the unshrinking band, led on,
By him, the dauntless Henderson,
Who cool, collected, held his seat
Until he saw the work complete,
The blessed work of Reformation,
Set, fair upon its true foundation,
The law which is exceeding broad,
The fix'd, the eternal law of God.

And when, to please a worthless thing
As e'er disgraced the name of king,
A venal, turncoat, drunken crew,
With treason changed their own free vow,
Such were the men, thy hills who trode,
Strong in the love and fear of God,
Defying through a long dark hour,
Alike the craft and rage of power,
Till, by their bright example charmed,
Even passive cowardice was warmed,
And dodging, downright selfishness,
Assum'd the patriot's stern address,
By which, impressed with awful dread,
The priest-rid, poltroon tyrant fled,
Leaving his friends to gaze upon
A court dissolved, a vacant throne.

MARION PAUL AIRD.

This gifted lady was born in the city of Glasgow in the year 1815, and was a niece of that eccentric poetical clergyman, the Rev. Hamilton Paul. When she had reached womanhood she removed to the town of Kilmarnock, and in 1846 published "The Home of the Heart." In 1853 she brought out "Heart Histories." She has also published "Sun and Shade." Her hymn, "Far Far Away," has been widely popular; and all her writings are pervaded by a bright religious fervour, and a lofty moral aim. Her native Doric was, by her, written with a purity which is now somewhat rare in those who attempt to string "The Caledonian Harp of Yore," as will be seen from this one stanza of her charming poem, "The E'enin' Fa'."

"But, O! there's no a bonnier sight,
 'Mang Scotland's hearths ava,
Than when, aneath the blinkin' light,
 They kneel at e'enin' fa'.
For auld an' young maun bend the knee,
 The servant, sire an' a',

Pour forth the holy psalmody—

A' ane at e'enin' fa'!"

Miss Aird was never married, and for some years previous to her death (which took place four years ago) she was confined to her bed from an injury received by a fall. So much was she loved and honoured in Kilmarnock, however, that the people of that town and district purchased a small annuity for her, which kept her in worldly comfort; while the power of the gospel in her own soul gave her large experience of "that peace which passeth understanding," till the end came, which was one of holy hope, and quiet, unwavering trust in the Redeemer.

THE MARTYRS' GRAVES.

O! Martyr-sprinkled Scotland!
Thy covenanted dust,
Like gold amid our mountains,
Gleams through tradition's rust.

We bless the hands that tear away
Dark weeds from martyr graves,
And graving o'er time's mossy urns,
Faith's witness-story saves.

Thy old grey stones are sprinkled with
"Blood poured like water free,"
And speak in holy oracles,
O! martyr-land, to thee.

These altar stones of sacrifice
Incarnate truth hath stored,
Where faith, in love-drawn characters,
Her red libation poured.

Like promise-stars in heaven's eye,
The lyart and the leal
Sleep lonely by the heath-bound tarn,
Where eerie cries the teal.

Their prophet-mantles rolled in blood,
By tribulation riven,
From Scotland's ark drove back the flood
"That chased them up to heaven;"

Where Peden bold, in flood and fold,
On mountain, moor, or glen,
All seer-like, bore salvation's cup
To fainting martyr-men;

When heaven's brooding wing of love,
Like Israel's pillar-cloud,
Them lapped in nature's misty tent,
A prayer-woven shroud.

Their home was oft the mountain cave;
Their couch the waving fern;
Their pillow oft the grey moss stone,
In moorlands dark and stern.

'Mid bleatings of the mountain lamb,
The melody of rills,
'The moss-hag, 'mid the purple blooms
Deep in the heathy hills;

The old cairn, where the plover wails,
And fern or thistle waves,
'Mid green spots in the wilderness—
There seek the martyrs' graves.

ROBERT ALLEN.

This poet was born at Kilbarchan, Renfrewshire, on the 4th of November, 1774. An early taste for poetry was fostered in him by his friend and near neighbour, the gifted but unfortunate Robert Tannahill, of Paisley, being also like him, a weaver to trade. Many of his best songs are said to have been composed at the loom, and contributed by him to the "Scottish Minstrel," published by R. A. Smith. Not till 1836, however, did he publish a volume. Notwithstanding the high excellence of every poem in it, it had but an indifferent reception, especially in his native town. Soured at an ungrateful, dull and unappreciative public, and sadly disappointed in his prospects, and with a wounded spirit, he sailed for the United States in 1841, when he had reached the age of 67 years. But "a wounded spirit," at that age, and in a foreign land, "who can bear?" And so the gentle and gifted poet survived the passage only six days, dying at New York on the 1st July, 1841.

With that late repentance which nearly always marks the people of those towns and districts where genius and talents have been neglected, the inhabitants of Kilbarchan,

on the 4th November, 1874, the centennary of his birth, held a centennial anniversary soiree in honour of the poet's memory. The outside literary world was now, however, loud in praise of the writings of the once despised but long since departed poet ; and now, as if they had a right to claim some part of that honour which so well belongs to his memory, the shop-keepers, the horse-coupers, and the other people of his native town generally hold a soiree in his memory, and build for him a tardy monument !

THE COVENANTER'S LAMENT.

There's nae Covenant noo, lassie!
There's nae Covenant noo!
The Solemn League and Covenant
Are a' broken through!
There's nae Renwick noo, lassie!
There's nae gui'd Cargill;
Nor holy Sabbath preaching
Upon the Martyrs' Hill.

Its naething but a sword, lassie!
A bluidy, bluidy ane,
Waving owre puir Scotland
For her rebellious sin.
Scotland's a' wrang lassie!
Scotland's a' wrang—
It's neither to the hill nor glen,
Lassie, we daur gang.

The Martyrs' Hill's forsaken
In simmer's dusk sae calm ;

There's nae gathering noo, lassie,
To sing the sacred psalm!
But the martyr's grave will rise, lassie.
Aboon the warrior's cairn;
And the martyr sound will sleep, lassie,
Aneath the waving fern!

THE TWA MARTYRS' WIDOWS.

Sit down, sit down by thy Martyr's side,
And I'se sit down by mine;
And I shall speak o' him to my Gude.
And thou may speak o' thine.

It's wae to thee, and it's wae to me.
For our day o' peace is gane,
And we maun sit wi' a tearfu' e'e,
In our borroch-ha' alane.

O Scotland! Scotland! it's wae to thee,
When thy lights are ta'en awa';
And it's wae, it's wae to a sinfu' lan'
When the righteous sae maun fa'.

It was a halie Covenant aith
We made wi' our Gude to keep,
And it's for the halie Covenant vow
That we maun sit and weep.

O wha will gang to yon hill-side,
To sing the psalm at e'en?

And wha will speak o' the love o' our Gude?
For the Covenant hath been.

The gerse may grow on yon hill-top,
And the heather sweetly blume;
But there nae mair we will sit at e'en,
For our hearts are in the tomb.

The hectic glow is upo' my cheek,
And the lily hue on thine;
Thou sure will lie by thy martyr's side,
And sure I sall sleep by mine.

HUGH BROWN.

About the beginning of this century Hugh Brown was born in the pretty town of Newmilns, in the parish of Loudoun, Ayrshire. After a very ordinary education he was put to the weaving trade; but while so engaged he learned so well and read so much in his evening hours, that, after a time, and when still young, he became qualified to keep a school himself, his first situation being at Drumclog in the uplands of Avondale, where the heroic Covenanters, under Mr. Robert Hamilton, Balfour of Burley, and others, put the cruel and bloody Graham of Claverhouse to an ignominious flight in June, 1679. As Mr. Brown took his walks there, and under the shadow of Loudoun hill, the spirit of poetry came upon him, and there he began, and completed his noble poem of "The Covenanters," in four cantos, which at once gained for him no mean place among the poets of Scotland, and ran through several editions. In 1838, Mr. Brown became head master in the large adventure, Barr School at Galston, where he continued a long time. When well advanced in years, he removed to Lanark; and by and by, when no

longer able to teach, into the city of Glasgow, where he began to be in want ; from which, however, he was relieved by a handsome money gift from the Royal Bounty Fund, obtained for him at the earnest solicitation of Mr. A. B. Todd, of Cumnock, who knew Mr. Brown, esteemed him for his worth, and admired him for his talents. His death took place about eight years ago ; but much of his poetry will live long in the memories of all patriotic and pious Scotsmen.

THE MARTYRDOM OF JOHN BROWN.

List to the tale of one who faultless fell,
Whose humble tombstone decks the moorland dell.

Far on the moor his lonely cot was placed,
A rude unpolished gem upon the waste.
The smoke curled lonely, mid the air on high
A moment hung and melted in the sky;
Where the brook murmured, and the mountain frowned
Through the far-stretching wilderness around;
The wild winged denizens of ether sung;
The shepherd on the breeze his music flung;
The sweet toned melody of nature there,
Thrilled in sweet carols through the summer air.
The peaceful inmates of that humble hearth,
Lived like primeval dwellers of the earth,—
Summer had smiles that charmed the lingering hour.
With winds perfumed from moss and mountain flower.
Cloud, sunshine, stream, the daisy on the sod,
Raised their unbiassed hearts in praise to God.
When winter swathed the land with unstained snow,

It came the type of holiness below ;
When the unfettered tempest, high and strong,
Rocked the lone cottage as it swept along,
Trusting in him who guides the storm's career,
'Twas God's own music to the listening ear.

Cast on the troubled waters of the time,
When prayer was treason, piety a crime,
When persecution raised her red right hand,
To crush the germ of freedom through the land ;
Then oft that cottage light, though faint and far,
Shone to the wanderer, as the guiding star
Shines to the sailor on a stormy sea,
Beaming with hope of happiness to be.

Summer's first morn had dawned upon the wild,
And nature's fair and lovely features smiled,
When pious Brown, with day's first beam arose,
And called his slumbering children from repose.
They gathered round the cottage hearth, to raise
The voice of psalms, the simple song of praise,
The holy untaught melody of heart,
Dearer to heaven than all the pomp of art.
Unheard by human ear the cadence dies,
Its last faint murmurs mingling with the skies.
He read of Love, from Mercy's hallowed Book,
Felt in his heart, and glowing in his look :
Hoping, exulting o'er the promise given,
That brightened weeping hours with hopes of heaven ;
Knelt with his children at the eternal throne,
And pleaded with a fervour not his own ;
Breathed, from a holy heaven-born influence given,

The language of a spirit fit for heaven;
His soul entranced with high devotion's glow,
Forgot he was a sufferer here below—
When lo! a shriek! the startled echoes rang
With neighing wars-steeds, and the warrior's clang
Woke him to earth, and drew him from the sky,
To clasp his weeping family and die.
Firm in the spirit of his prayer he stood,
Resigned, yet fearless; calm, but unsubdued.
“Prepare!” the dark and fierce avenger cried;
“Prepare!” his language, in his hour of pride.

The good man knelt upon the flowery heath,
Soon to be crimsoned with the tide of death;
His farewell prayer of triumph and repose;
Heaven's glories dawning o'er his earthly woes,
In the true martyr's spirit, plead with heaven,
His death, his country's wrongs might be forgiven.
And more than angel's eloquence imparts—
It touched the tearless soldiers' iron hearts;
And pity checked that dark and bloody horde,
Save one—the bosom of their savage lord.
The martyr rose, with calm, unruffled breast,
Like one prepared for everlasting rest.
His weeping little ones were clustered near;
He kissed each child, and dropped a parting tear;
A long farewell breathed to his faithful wife;
And nature for a moment clung to life!
When loud and high, the leader's stern command
Rose fierce, but vain, above that bloody band.
Though stain'd with slaughter's darkest, foulest hue,
No arm was raised, no death-winged bullet flew.

The ruthless Clavers raised his hand on high,
Rage in his heart, and mockery in his eye;
A moment—and the martyred hero lay
Redeemed with blood; his soul had passed away!
From death and insult, springing to a throne,
The guilt his foe's, the triumph all his own.

The Theban mother gloried in her son,
Borne on his shield, from battle he had won;
The peasant's wife, far on the Scottish moor,
With none to soothe, did heavier grief endure;
The Christian matron, to her nature true,
Leaned o'er her slaughtered lord, and triumphed too.

THE REV. JAMES G. SMALL.

This writer was born in Edinburgh in 1817, his father being a military officer. Educated at the High School and the University of that city, he was recognized as an apt scholar, and a genuine and pleasing poet—two prizes being obtained by him from Professor Wilson, of the moral philosophy class.

After receiving license to preach and while yet a probationer, he published a volume of poems including "The Scottish Martyrs." All the great living poets extolled the volume, among them Wordsworth and Lord Macaulay. Other volumes followed, and these were also popular. In 1846 Mr. Small was ordained minister of the Free Church of Bervie, near the town of Montrose, where he was as popular as a preacher and pastor as he had been as a poet.

Mr. Small's verse is at all times vivid and animated in description, and patriotic in sentiment, displaying ardent piety, and noble patriotism. It moves along free and impetuous as does one of his own mountain streams. This good man and true poet died a few years ago.

THE LAND OF THE MARTYRS.

I said my harp should sleep for aye—flung by—a useless thing;
I said that thou, my joyous muse, must curl thine eager wing;
I said that I must onward press, my pilgrim path along,
Nor cheer me, as in days gone by, with the glad voice of song.

Vain thought for him who strays alone o'er this wild martyr
land!

I feel a spell upon me here I may not dare withstand.
If on these scenes that stretch around mine eye unmoved
should look,
The murmuring streams would speak to me with sadly mild
rebuke.

For still they seem to whisper, as they sweep their pebbled
bed,
The names of those who here, of old, for Jesus lived and bled;
And still they seem to image, in their pure and peaceful flow,
The holy lives of those who dwelt beside them long ago.

Each rock and cave, each woody holm, preserves their mem-
ory still;

There stands for them a monument in every rugged hill;
And yet along the mountain side a lingering echo floats,
Where oft of old their song of praise sent up its joyful notes.

The old familiar voices upon the breezes come,
And while all nature speaks aloud, shall man alone, be dumb?
Ah! no; nor is his voice unheard—the same rejoicing strain
That gladdened once the wilderness is thrilling there again.

'Tis heard by Renwick's simple tomb, amid the green Glen-
cairn;

'Tis heard amid the heathy wilds of lone and drear Carsphairn;
'Tis heard beside the silvery Ken, and by the banks of Ayr,
Where Welsh and Guthrie raised of old the voice of praise
and prayer.

'Tis heard where lie the bones of him* who lived to preach
and pray,

And died with prayer upon his lips amid the bloody fray,

'Tis heard where pours the winding Nith, and sweeps the
placid Dee;

It mingles with the voice of streams, and with the sounding
sea.

'Tis heard beside the rude grey stones† where oft, in days of
old,

The holy convocation met, the sacred feast to hold:

* Cameron, of whom it was said that "he lived preaching and praying, and died praying and fighting."

† The communion stones at Irongray.

Green Anwoth's† heights have heard afar the same triumphant song,
And all the echoing rocks around the hallowed strain prolong.

'Tis heard where'er the memory lives, of those whose blood
was shed
Like water in the glorious cause of Christ, their living Head;
Where'er a fearless heart shakes off the world's debasing
bonds,
And to the known, the thrilling voice of Christ, the King, responds.

'Tis heard from thousand voices now of steadfast men and
true,
Where once the scattered remnant met—the faithful but the
few;
And still more loud that strain shall swell, though hand should
join in hand,
From moor to hill, from hill to shore, to drive the dauntless
band.

Vain thought, that they whose breasts are warmed with blood
of martyred sires
Whose song of praise unsilenced rose, 'mid tortures, chains
and fires,
Should shrink because the tempest gloom hangs lowering o'er
their path,
Or quail before the ruder storm of man's relentless wrath!

† Where Samuel Rutherford was for sometime minister.

Vain thought, that they whose eyes are fixed, in confidence
and love,
On Him who deigned to leave for them his glorious home
above,
And for the joy before him set such bitter anguish bore,
Should fear to tread the roughest way which He has trode
before.

Ah! no; where'er the Shepherd leads, the trusting sheep will
go,
Rejoicing still to follow him, because his voice they know;
And pleasant is the path to them, though rugged oft it be,
Where yet the footsteps of the flock are traced along the lea

WILLIAM McCOMB.

Neither the date of this author's birth or death have we been able to ascertain. All that we can state is that he was probably born near the beginning of the present century in the north of Ireland, where it would seem he died before reaching a very ripe old age. Nor can the date of his fine poem, here given, be definitely learned. It is supposed to have been written somewhere between 1840 and 1850, while the author was in the prime of life. He was a man of magnificent proportions and fine presence, being over six feet in height, as described by the father of Mr. Isaac Kitchin, of Wilkinsburg, Pa., who knew him well. From the present Mr. Kitchin we learn further that the author of this poem was a bookseller in Belfast for many years. At the same time he was a member of the large and influential congregation connected with the Presbyterian church of the Synod of Ulster, of which the famous Dr. Cook was pastor. The writer of so admirable a poem should be better known. It is hoped that a wider knowledge of the poem will lead to fuller information concerning its gifted author.

OUR FATHERS—WHERE ARE THEY?

Our Fathers, where are they—the faithful and wise?
They are gone to their mansions prepared in the skies;
With the ransomed in glory, forever they sing,
All worthy the Lamb, our Redeemer and King.

Our Fathers, who were they? Men strong in the Lord,
Who were nurtured and fed with the milk of the Word;
Who breathed in the freedom their Saviour had given,
And fearlessly waved their blue banner to heaven.

Our Fathers, how lived they? In fasting and prayer,
Still grateful for blessing, and willing to share
Their bread with the hungry, their basket and store,
Their home with the homeless that came to the door.

Our Fathers, where knelt they? Upon the green sod,
And poured out their heart to their covenant God;
And oft in the deep glen, beneath the wild sky,
The songs of their Zion were wafted on high.

Our Fathers, how died they? They valiantly stood
The rage of the foeman, and sealed with their blood,
By “faithful contendings,” the faith of their sires,
’Mid tortures, in prisons, on scaffolds, in fires.

Our Fathers, where sleep they? Go search the wild cairn,
Where the birds of the hill make their nests in the fern;
Where the dark purple heather, and bonny blue bell,
Deck the mountain and moor, where our forefathers fell.

PROF. JOHN VEITCH.

John Veitch, L.L. D., was born at Peebles, Oct. 24, 1829. He came of a Covenanter family famous in the days of persecution. One of his ancestors, the Rev. Wm. Veitch, born in 1640, was at Pentland Hills, and after the battle fled to England, and on returning, defied every attempt to apprehend him. From a hole or cave on the highest peak of Carter Fell he sallied forth at night to hold religious services. It was natural, therefore, that while Prof. Veitch, who graduated at the University of Edinburgh in 1851, and soon after became assistant to Sir William Hamilton in the chair of logic and metaphysics in that University, and in 1864 professor of logic and rhetoric in the University of Glasgow, should turn his attention to the inspiring history of the Covenanters as well as to the drier subjects of dialectics and philosophy. He has translated some of Descartes' writings, prepared a memoir of Dugald Stewart and another of Sir Wm. Hamilton, whose lectures on metaphysics and logic he also helped to edit. In addition to such philosophical works he has written a preface for the volume of Memorials of the Ettrick

Shepherd, edited by the poet's daughter, Mrs. Gordon, and a book on the "History and Poetry of the Scottish Border," and still another entitled "Hillside Rhymes." We give here his poem on Andrew Hislop, which first appeared in the monthly magazine, "Good Words."

ANDREW HISLOP.

[One of the proscribed Covenanters, overcome by sickness, had found shelter in the house of a respectable widow, and had died there. The corpse was discovered by the laird of Westerhall, a petty tyrant, and an apostate. He pulled down the widow's house, left her and her younger children to wander in the fields, and dragged Andrew, a lad of 17, before Claverhouse. The guns were loaded, and the youth was told to pull his bonnet over his face. He refused, and stood confronting his murderers with his Bible in his hand. "I can look you in the face," he said; "I have done nothing of which I need be ashamed. But how will you look in that day when you shall be judged by what is written in this book?" He fell dead, and was buried in the moor. (See Macaulay's History of England, Vol. I., Chap. iv.) The story is found also in Wodrow and the Cloud of Witnesses.]

Andrew Hislop! shepherd lad,
"Martyr" graven on your tomb;

Here you met the brutal Clavers,
Here you bore his murderous doom!

Coming from the hill that morn,
Doing humble duty well;
Free in step, your honest look,
Born of sunlight on the fell.

Here the Eskdale mountains round you,
In your ear the murmuring stream;
Here, 't is May, the bleating lambs—
Life but seems a peaceful dream.

With no weapon but the crook
Your soft helpless flock to guide;
Here they shot you, shepherd lad,
Here you poured your warm heart tide!

“Ere I pass into the Presence,
May I make a prayer to God?”
“Not one word,” said brutal Clavers,
“We’ve no time, you wretched clod!”

“Draw you bonnet o’er your eyes,
That is boon enough for thee.”
“I pass to God with open face,
Whom you will hardly dare to see!”

Westerhall and Claverhouse,
Turn now since the deed is done!
What care ye for rebel corpse?
Let it bleach beneath the sun!

So they left you, martyr brave,
Left you on the reddened sod;
But no raven touched your face;
On it lay the peace of God!

On the moor the widow mother
Bows to lot of dule and pine;
And Westerhäll and Claverhouse
Have merrli y rode back to dine!

JAMES HOGG.

[We are indebted for the first part of this Memoir to the Life of the Ettrick Shepherd, by Dr. Shelton Mackenzie, in his fine edition of the "*Noctes Ambrosianae*." This last star in the constellation of our Covenant Poets is one of the first magnitude.]

James Hogg, commonly called "The Ettrick Shepherd," was born on the 25th of January, 1772, in a cottage on the banks of the Ettrick, a tributary of the Tweed, in Selkirkshire, a mountainous and picturesque part of Scotland.

He died on the 21st of November, 1835, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. His mother, who literally had taught herself to read the Bible, possessed a natural taste for poetry. It was her daily habit to read from the Bible such passages as she thought likely to interest and improve her sons. She would also recite to them Border ballads, and often win them to tears by the simple relation of tales of sorrow and tenderness of days not far remote, and within their own locality.

When James was seven years old he was compelled to

go to service. His occupation was to herd a few cows for a neighbouring farmer. His wages for the half year was a ewe lamb and a pair of new shoes. In the first winter he returned home and had three months' schooling. He got into a class so far advanced that they could read the Bible. He tried writing, but each letter was nearly an inch in length. Nor, to his dying day, did he write well. His whole course of school education was obtained in six months at this time. "After this," he says of himself, "I was never another day at any school whatever."

During the whole time of Hogg's service as a herdsman, up to 1790, when he was eighteen years of age, he had no book to read except the Bible and the version of the Psalms of David used by the Scottish church. He then hired himself to Mr. Laidlaw, of Black House, whom he served as a shepherd for ten years.

In the spring of 1796, at the age of twenty-four, Hogg made his first attempt at writing verse. Most of his poetry is pastoral, as might be expected. But his surroundings on the mountains, and in the moorlands, together with the traditions with which he became familiar, and specially those of his own ancestry, who had suffered persecution as Covenanters among the wilds of Ettrick, could hardly fail to call forth strains suited to this volume.

Prof. Wilson, in his "Noctes," puts the following words into the mouth of the shepherd poet: "I look to the mountains, Mr. North, and stern they staun' in a glorious gloom, for the sun is strugglin' wi' a thunder-cloud, and facing him a faint but fast-brightenin' rainbow. The ancient spirit o' Scotland comes on me frae the sky; and the soul within me re-swears in silence the oath of the Covenant. There they are—the Covenanters—a' gathered thegither, no in

fear and tremblin', but wi' Bibles in their bosoms, and swords by their sides, in a glen deep as the sea, and still as death but for the soun' o' a stream and the cry o' an eagle. 'Let us sing to the praise and glory o' God the hundred Psalm,' quoth a loud clear voice, though it be the voice o' an auld man ; and up to Heaven hauds he his strang withered hauns, and in the gracious wunds o' heaven are flying abroad his gray hairs, or say rather, white as the silver or the snaw. The eagle and the stream are silent, and the heavens and the earth are brocht close thegither by that triumphin' Psalm. Ay, the clouds cease their sailing and lie still ; the mountains bow their heads ; and the crags, do they not seem to listen as in that remote place the hour o' the delighted day is filled with a holy hymn to the Lord God o' Israel?" (See *Noctes*, vol. iii., pp. 394, 395.)

In his famous "Brownie o' Bodsbeck," Hogg illustrates the days of persecution. The "brownie" himself was a proscribed Covenanter. Others of the Ettrick Shepherd's prose writings are also Covenanting tales, such as "The Cameronian Preacher's Talk," "A Tale of Pentland," and "A Tale of the Martyrs." We give a fine selection on "The Land of the Covenant," and one of the poet's most touching songs.

THE LAND OF THE COVENANT.

Far inland, where the mountain crest
O'erlooks the waters of the west;
And, 'midst the moorland wilderness,
Dark moss-cleuchs form a drear recess,
Curtained with ceaseless mists that feed
The sources of the Clyde and Tweed—
There injured Scotland's patriot band
For faith and freedom made their stand,
When traitor Kings, who basely sold
Their country's fame for Gallic gold—
Too abject o'er the free to reign,
Warned by a father's fate in vain—
In bigot fury trampled down
The race who oft preserved their crown:
There, worthy of his masters, came
The despots' champion, bloody Graham,
To stain for aye a warrior's sword,
And lead a fierce, though fawning horde,
The human bloodhounds of the earth,
To hunt the peasant from his hearth.

Tyrants! could not misfortune teach
That man has rights beyond your reach?
Thought ye the torture and the stake
Could that intrepid spirit break,
Which even in woman's breast withstood
The terrors of the fire and flood?
Yes—though the sceptic's tongue deride
Those martyrs who for conscience died;
Though modish history blight their fame,
And sneering courtiers hoot the name
Of men who dared alone be free
Amidst a nation's slavery,
Yet long for them the poet's lyre
Shall wake its notes of heavenly fire;
Their names shall nerve the patriot's hand,
Upraised to save a sinking land,
And piety shall learn to burn
With holier transports o'er their urn.

But now, all sterner thoughts forgot,
Peace broods upon the peasant's cot;
And if tradition still prolongs
The memory of his father's wrongs,
'Tis but the grateful thought that borrows
A blessing from departed sorrows.
How lovely seems the simple vale
Where lives our sires' heroic tale!
The mossy pass, the mountain flood,
Still hallowed by the patriot's blood;
The rocky cavern, once his tent,
And now his deathless monument,
Rehearsing to the kindling thought

What Faith inspired and Valour wrought!
Oh, ne'er shall he whose ardent prime
Was fostered in the freeman's clime,
Though doomed to seek a distant strand,
Forget his glorious native land;
Forget—'mid Brahma's blood-stained groves—
Those sacred scenes of youthful loves;
Sequestered haunts—so still, so fair,
That holy Faith might worship there,
And Error weep away her stains,
And dark Remorse forget his pains;
And homeless hearts, by fortune tost.
Or early hopeless passion crost,
Regain the peace they long had lost.

THE COVENANTER'S SCAFFOLD HYMN.

[This "Scaffold Hymn" gives the substance of the utterances of many a sufferer in immediate view of the martyr's crown. It forms an appropriate conclusion to this collection of Poems of the Covenant. It will serve to inspire the reader, as he lays down this volume, with a renewed determination to count all things loss for Christ, and to endure hardness as a good soldier of the Saviour King. With heavenly portals opening, and Christ in all his kingly glory welcoming, shall we not prove faithful unto death ?]

Sing with me, sing with me, sing with me!
Friends in Jesus, sing with me;
All my sufferings, all my woe,
All my griefs I here forego.
Farewell, terror, sighing, grieving,
Praying, hearing and believing,
Earthly trust and all its wrongings,
Earthly love and all its longings.
Sing with me, sing with me, sing with me,
Friends in Jesus, sing with me!

Sing with me, sing with me, sing with me!
Blessed spirits, sing with me:
To the Lamb our song shall be
Through a glad eternity.
Farewell, earthly morn and even,
Sun, and moon, and stars of heaven.
Heavenly portals, ope before me;
Welcome Christ, in all Thy glory!
Sing with me, sing with me, sing with me,
Blessed spirits, sing with me!

THE END.

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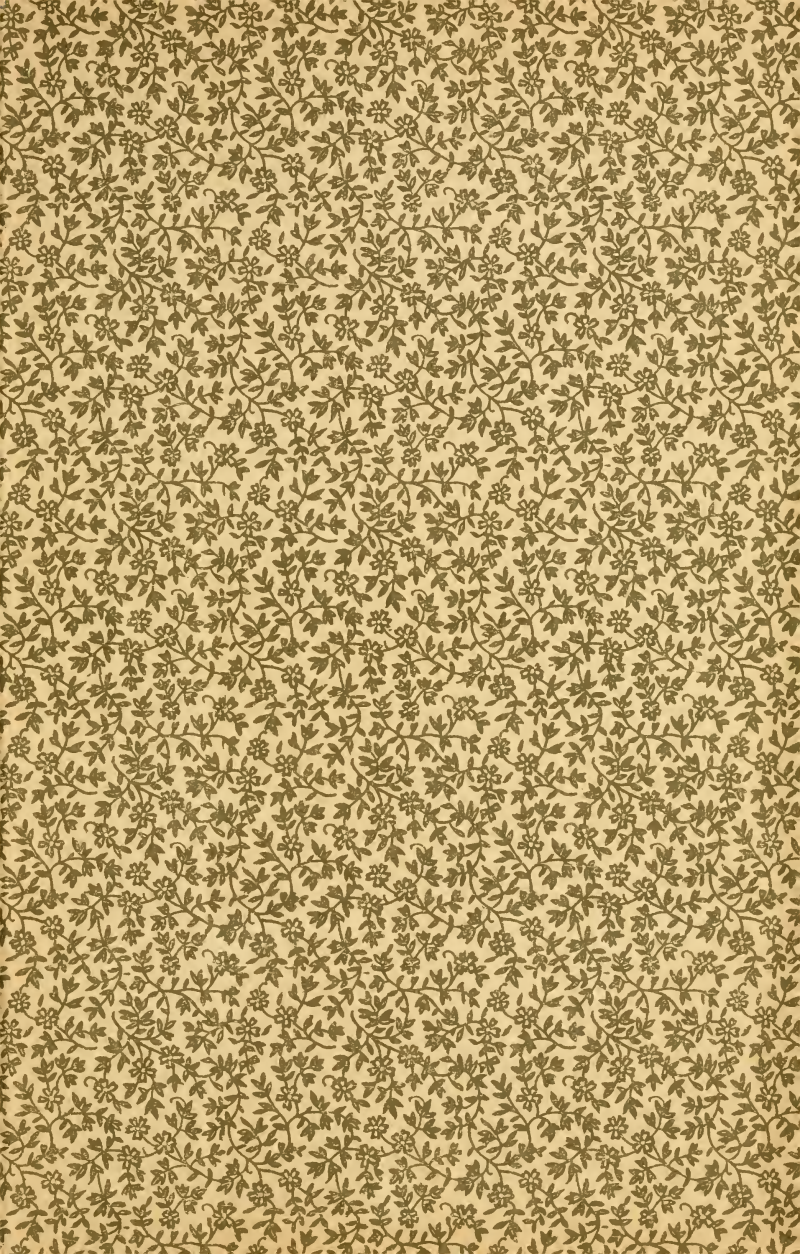
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